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Book _____

LETTERS

WRITTEN IN

THE INTERIOR OF CUBA,

BETWEEN

THE MOUNTAINS OF ARCANA, TO THE EAST, AND OF CUSCO,
TO THE WEST,

IN THE MONTHS OF

FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, AND MAY, 1828.

BY THE LATE

REV. ABIEL ABBOT, D. D.,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN BEVERLY, IN MASSACHUSETTS.



BOSTON,

BOWLES AND DEARBORN, 50 WASHINGTON STREET.

1829.

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DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, *to wit* :

District Clerk's Office.

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the eighteenth day of February, A. D. 1829, in the fiftythird year of the Independence of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, Bowles & Dearborn, of the said District, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, *to wit* :

“ Letters written in the Interior of Cuba, between the Mountains of Arcana, to the East, and of Cusco, to the West, in the Months of February, March, April, and May, 1828. By the late Rev. ABIEL ABBOT, D. D., Pastor of the First Church in Beverly, in Massachusetts.”

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" and also to an act, entitled, "An act supplementary to an act, entitled an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned; and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving and etching historical and other prints."

JNO. W. DAVIS, } *Clerk of the District of
Massachusetts,*

BOSTON,

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present is a posthumous work ; but it was originally designed for publication by the author, and was in a good degree prepared for the press at the time of his sudden and lamented death, on his return voyage from Cuba. It had not, indeed, the last revision and finish of the author, a circumstance of unfeigned regret to all, who knew him ; but he had so far completed his design as to sketch the title page, and draw out at large the preface, which is contained in the present volume. With a view of guarding against accidents, and under a consciousness of the uncertainty of human life, although his health was nearly re-established, he wrote directions, on the eve of his departure from Cuba, as to the arrangement and disposal of his manuscripts, in the event of his decease. Those directions have been implicitly followed by the friends, who have assumed the responsibility of the present publication. In all respects the manuscripts have been trans-

cribed, exactly as they were originally written, with the exception only of the names of persons, and a few slight alterations, additions of words, which had escaped the attention of the learned author, and the omission of matters purely domestic and personal, which he probably intended to suppress. Some few portions of the latter are still retained, as they exhibit his excellent feelings, and amiable character, in a just light, and the occasion no longer requires that they should be wholly withdrawn from the public notice. A brief sketch of his life and character is also added to the present volume for the information of strangers, and to convey some general notion of his real worth, and blameless life, and exalted piety.

DECEMBER, 1828.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF THE LATE

REV. DR ABBOT.

THE Author of the "Letters from Cuba" has for so many years occupied a distinguished rank among the Divines of New England, that any sketch of his life and parentage, however imperfect, can scarcely fail of being grateful to the public. Probably, at some future day, the memoirs of his life and character may be given to the world by some biographer, with that fulness and accuracy which befit his own merits, and may be justly required by the Society of which he was so long an ornament.

He was born at Andover, in the county of Essex, (Mass.) on the 17th of August, 1770. His parents belonged to that truly respectable class, the yeomanry of New England, and in the bosom of his family he passed his early years, and learned those habits of simplicity, diligence, and religious propriety of conduct, which the descendants of the Puritans have maintained from the first settlement of the country. He owed much, indeed, to the daily example of his pious parents, and especially, to the solicitude and instruction of his excellent mother. After the usual preparatory studies, he was matriculated at Harvard University, in 1783; and having passed the prescribed period of studies there, he received his degree of Bachelor of Arts in the year 1787. In a class distinguished for talents and attainments, (and the present President Adams was one of his class-mates,) he obtained a high rank, and

received the usual collegiate honors which are awarded to superior scholarship. His collegiate life was such as his best friends could wish, without blame or stain, and glided away in the enjoyment of the respect of his instructors, and of the esteem of his cotemporaries. He soon afterward became an assistant teacher in the academy of his native town, and began to pursue his theological studies under the direction of the Rev. Jonathan French, then minister of the parish. At the age of twentyfour he began to preach, and at once attracted notice as an able and interesting preacher. He immediately received a unanimous call to settle as a minister in Haverhill, on the west bank of the Merrimack. He accepted the call, and in that flourishing and beautiful village, passed the next eight years of his life. It was at this period, that the writer of this sketch first became acquainted with him, and he can testify to the affectionate regard, and warm attachment of his congregation to him; and to the universal respect with which he was regarded, both by the laity and the clergy. No circumstance whatever occurred to interrupt this harmony between the pastor and his flock, until the wants of a growing family, and an inadequate support compelled him, as an imperative duty, to ask a dismissal. It cost him great anxiety, and many painful struggles, to come to such a result; and the separation, which was very reluctantly granted, was deemed by both parties a matter of deep regret. He was soon afterwards invited to resettle in Beverly, in the parish then vacant by the appointment of the Rev. Dr McKean to the presidency of Bowdoin College. His talents and reputation as a preacher had already given him an extensive popularity; and several religious societies were desirous of procuring his services. He, however, declined all the other offers, and accepted the call at Beverly, and during the residue of his life, a space of twenty-four years, he devoted himself with the most exemplary diligence, devotion, and success to the duties of his charge. Few men have enjoyed, during so long a period, such uninterrupted happiness in all their parochial relations. Few men have united such purity of life, fervor of devotion, unaffected piety, and

generous courtesy, with so much intellectual attainment. Few men have been at once so learned and so modest; so gentle, and so sincere; so earnest for the faith once delivered to the saints, and yet so meek and unobtrusive upon the feelings of others; so thoroughly imbued with a sense of the everlasting importance of Christianity, and yet so little heated by the spirit of proselytism; so genuine a lover of peace, and yet so warm an advocate of truth.

During the few last years of his life, Dr Abbot's health was sensibly impaired; and he was compelled to make several distant journeys, in the hope of regaining it. He passed the winter of 1827, 1828, in and near Charleston, South Carolina, and embarked for Cuba, under the advice of his friends, in the following spring. His complaints being of a pulmonary nature, and threatening a hectic decline, it was thought that the mild climate of that island afforded the fairest prospect for his recovery. The letters now published, were written during his travels on the Island, in the course of his residence there. He embarked in May, 1828, on his return home, and his friends indulged the belief that his health was almost entirely restored. He arrived at Charleston about the first of June, and preached there on the following Sunday. He sailed for New York on the next day; on Tuesday he was seized with a severe pain in his head, and his illness, though not at first deemed dangerous, continued without abatement during the whole passage. He died on Saturday, the 7th of June, at half past twelve o'clock, P. M., just as the ship came to anchor at the quarantine ground near the city of New York. He was able on that morning to dress himself and go on deck, and to take a last farewell look of his beloved country. His remains were deposited in the cemetery on Staten Island. The funeral service was performed by the Rev. Mr Miller.

The following sketch is taken from an excellent sermon preached by the Rev. Dr Flint before his bereaved congregation, on the 18th of June following. It portrays Dr Abbot's character with uncommon felicity and force.

“It is a grateful consideration, that in reviewing the character and ministry of your pastor, you have no obliquities of temper, no eccentricities of conduct, no extravagancies of doctrine or opinion to excuse or lament in him. There was nothing harsh or repulsive in his creed or manners. And how should there be, when one was modelled from the instructions, and the other from the character of him who bore the appellation of the Lamb of God, and on whom the spirit of heaven rested under the symbol of a dove? He deemed it no sin against any law of God, or the example of his Master, to be a gentleman; I do not mean of the school of Chesterfield, as of hypocrisy, as of deceit, but as of sincerity, as of God,—of the school of St Paul, who exhorts a minister to *be gentle towards all men*, to be courteous, to become, as far as in uprightness he may, all things to all men.

“There was an amenity and benignity in Dr Abbot’s air, and voice, and address, exceedingly conciliating to strangers, and endearing to his friends. His countenance beamed with complacency, and bespoke that inward satisfaction and peace

‘Which goodness bosoms over.’

He had always something kind and courteous to say to every one into whose company he fell, even for a few moments; and no one could long remain in his society, that had a heart, who did not feel that he had been conversing with a man, equally amiable, intelligent, and gifted. The minister and the man were never in him at variance with each other. In his most playful moods there was no unbecoming levity. His sport was the innocence of a child, seasoned with the wit of a man, and guarded by the circumspection of a Christian.

“Of his religious sentiments it is enough to say, that he called no man master, that he belonged to no sect but that of good men,—to no school, but that of Jesus Christ, and that he was liberal in the best sense of the term. Though he loved, like the eloquent preacher whose words I quote, ‘to escape the narrow walls of a particular church, and to stand under the open sky, in the broad daylight, looking far and wide, seeing

with his own eyes, hearing with his own ears,' still he *never* thought himself called upon to denounce the opinions of others, and rarely, to obtrude his own upon the controverted points of the day. He preached, as he thought his Master would have him, speaking what, after diligent and prayerful inquiry, he conceived to be *the truth, in love*.

"The publications of Dr Abbot are numerous and valuable. They all bear the stamp of a mind early imbued with the savor of classical studies, familiar with the best models of the English pulpit, enriched by observation and reflection, and fertile in apt and beautiful illustrations,—a mind susceptible of deep and lively impressions from all that is bright, and fair, and lovely, and magnificent in creation,—a mind which had found treasures untold in the Scriptures, and in which *dwelt the words of Christ richly in all wisdom*, whence he drew expressions and images that gave richness and weight to his discourses and writings, and often reminded his hearer or reader of Solomon's similitude of *words fitly spoken, to apples of gold in pictures of silver*; but what is best of all, they evince a mind always intent upon doing good, and which loved and sought, uttered and enforced truth, only as it appeared to him to be conducive to goodness.

"Dr Abbot was *an eloquent man*, as well as *mighty in the Scriptures*. If Jehovah sent Aaron to communicate his will to Pharaoh *because he could speak well*, Dr Abbot possessed this credential of his office in an eminent degree. His manner in the pulpit was singularly impressive, grave, natural, solemn—

'Much impress'd

Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And mainly anxious, that the flock he fed
Might feel it too; affectionate in look,
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of grace to guilty men.'

He exhibited a beautiful union of zeal with prudence, and the love of souls so evidently dictated his admonitions and reproofs to the delinquent, that his fidelity and plainness seldom gave

offence. In the sick chamber and in the house of mourning, he was truly *a son of consolation*.

"Few men have lived more endeared, or more deservedly dear in the more private relations of life. Like all virtuous men, he sought and found the best happiness which this world affords, in the bosom of domestic affection, in the reciprocation of those sacred charities and daily offices of love, which render home, the fireside of a christian and well ordered family, at once the best emblem of the mansions which await the righteous in our Father's house in heaven, and the best scene of preparation for those mansions. The yearnings of his heart to return to the asylum of his repose, of his purest affections and joys, are affectingly expressed on his arrival from Cuba at Charleston: 'Happy am I to touch natal soil again, and hope soon to revisit "*home, sweet home.*"'

"I remark one trait more in these days of inestimable value in a minister; his signal love of peace. No object was dearer to his heart than to bring ministers and the people to feel on this subject, as he felt. His convention sermon, the delivery of which was almost the last public act of his ministry, will now seem to his brethren, to the community, and still more to his flock, like the dying bequest of Jesus to his disciples: '*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you.*' No; the world, and I grieve to say it, the ministers of the Prince of Peace, too many of them, speak a very different language and breathe a very different spirit. But with that dying appeal of your pastor in your hands, you, my brethren of this ancient and respectable society, will feel yourselves inexcusable in the sight of heaven, if you allow discord to arise among you, or division to scatter you. How much he was grieved by the angry disputes of the day, and the rending of churches and societies, appears in the following extract from the letter before cited. 'Yesterday was the anniversary of my peace sermon before the Convention. I fear its gentle notes have not been re-echoed this year. There is no one thing that gives me so much pain in returning to my

beloved country, as to think of its religious dissensions. May the God of peace hush them, and for ever preserve my voice from the notes of discord.' Happy spirit, thy voice never uttered the notes of discord, and they can never again reach thy ear. Thou art now joined to the sons of peace, the children of God,—

‘ Who have no discord in their song,
No winter in their year.’

Farewell, faithful servant of God ; thy warfare is accomplished, thy work is finished, and thy reward is sure. O God, with whom do rest the spirits of just men made perfect, grant that we who survive, may *gird up the loins of our minds,—be sober and watch unto prayer,—*that by diligence and perseverance in well doing, we *may be followers of them who through faith and patience, are now inheriting the promises. Amen.*”

To this extract, it would be injustice to the memory of the deceased, not to add another, from an interesting sermon of the Rev. Mr Bartlett, one of his most confidential friends, delivered on the first Sunday on which religious services were performed in the church after Dr Abbot's death was made known in Beverly. It can scarcely fail to touch every pious heart by the grace of the narrative, as well as the christian spirit which pervades it.

“I would, on this occasion, forbear indulging personal feelings of friendship, by attempting to pourtray all the excellencies of his private character. I shall narrate only one circumstance, which, *now*, I feel that I have not the liberty to conceal;—a circumstance which illustrates his piety and faithfulness, his preparedness for death, and the justice of applying to his character the words of the text. On a visit to him, made at his request, a few days before his departure to a warmer climate for the benefit of his health ; at a time when his physician and friends, and he himself, were apprehensive that the disease which then oppressed him would speedily terminate his life ; at this time, when the heart has no disguise, and the soul is anxious to utter all that it deems true and kind, important and

useful, he thus addressed me, (evidently with a wish that it should be remembered, and at a fit time communicated,)—"I believe the hour of my departure is at hand; how near, I cannot say; but not far distant is the time when I shall be in the immediate presence of my Maker. This impression leads me to look back upon my life, and inwardly upon my present state. In the review, I find many things to be humbled and penitent for, and many things to fill me with gratitude and praise. I have, I trust, the testimony of my heart, that my life, my best powers, my time, and my efforts, have, in the main, been sincerely given to God and to mankind. Of all the years of my life, the present, in review, gives me most pleasure. You know my plans and labors, and the design of them, (alluding to discourses delivered before the convention of ministers, and at the ordination of Rev. A. Abbot, and to certain contributions to a religious publication, the Christian Visitant, whose object coincided with his views, and to extend the circulation of which he was making great efforts.) In these I have endeavored to check the spirit of contention among Christians, and as a disciple of the Prince of Peace, to diffuse the spirit of love and peace, to inspire Christians with a warmer zeal for the great objects of religion. The efforts were great. My health, and perhaps my life, are the sacrifice. If the Lord will, be it so. If ever I faithfully served him, it was in these services. If ever I felt prepared for death, it was when they were finished. If ever I knew, and felt, the delightful import of that passage,—*I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, &c.* it was then, and it is now. In my own bosom, there is peace. Whether life or death be before me, all is well. I can say, *the will of the Lord be done.*' With the greatest serenity, he alluded to the expected issue of his disorder, and seemed filled with *a good hope through grace* of eternal life. He was indeed, *ready to be offered*, and is now removed, we believe, to a higher sphere, and to nobler employment and joys."

PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR.

In October last, the writer, by the advice of his physician, sought the restoring influence of a mild climate. On the 29th of that month, he sailed for South Carolina, and passed three months in Charleston, on John's Island, and the banks of Cooper river.

With improved health he sailed for Cuba, and arrived in Matanzas on the 9th of February. The three following weeks he spent in the charming partidos of Sumidero and Lemonal, enjoying facilities for examining that important district of the island from the tops of the Arcana to the bays of Cardenas and Camiraoca, from Rio Nuevo to the romantic Canimar, and bay of Matanzas.

The two following weeks were spent in Matanzas and its vicinity, with equal advantages.

The sixth week was passed on the way to Havana, and in that city ; and the months following in the vast garden of the island, lying between Havana and the mountains of Cusco, and the southern and northern waters, which wash the shores of that important section of the island.

He has ridden chiefly on horseback, and, most of the distance but once over the same road, more than eight hundred miles ; and, strictly reckoning short excursions, a thousand miles. Through a generous kindness, certainly unparalleled in any other country, he has been attended almost constantly, by one or more gentleman, familiar with the tongues of the island, and

often by parties, directing and facilitating his inquiries. The letters were written while the views which they attempt to picture, were before him, or fresh in his mind. They have, however, been subjected to a careful correction in subsequent additional lights. Opinions have been formed, and on further inquiry abandoned, or materially modified.

The considerable section of this important island, subjected to his inspection, has been a continuous scene of delightful novelties, whether examining the sterile mountain, or the fertile and cultivated, the forest, or plains covered with coffee trees in bloom, or young cherry, with cane falling at the stroke of the machet, or springing for a new crop, or the bateys of the plantations, and the broad and extensive avenues which intersect them, rich with shade and flowers, and fruits in almost infinite variety. Often from the tops of mountains has he looked into two seas; and he has descended into deep hollows, and deeper caves, and surveyed their extensive halls of pendant or erect stalactites and unstained petrifications, glittering with reflected light.

To the important subject of population, he has directed his attention, and to the constituent proportions of white and colored, of free and slave; and to the manners and customs, and moral condition of the country.

He has been sparing of remarks as to the political state and prospects of the island. He believes that high destinies are before these islanders, rich in 6,800 square leagues of fertile soil, and, comparatively with other slave-holding islands, strong in its *free* population, and a numerous *yeomanry*, armed and mounted. But they are not ripe for change. Remaining unoppressed, the mixed population will become more homogeneous, and patriotic; and delay may prepare them ultimately, with union, with wisdom, and safety, to assume an attitude as dignified as their numbers, resources, and relative position entitle them to take.

To these interesting islanders he bids adieu, with emotions of

the sincerest gratitude for their hospitality and friendship, and with fervent prayers for their peace and prosperity.

He expects a liberal indulgence from the best informed in Cuba affairs, and from the public, as the subjects he has touched are numerous, and he has not had the advantage of the remarks on the interior of any preceding traveller. The pictures he has given, are of things which were immediately before him, as exact in circumstance, and as true to the life as his pencil could pourtray; and the statement of facts is correct according to his conviction. For he believes that a traveller is as much obliged to regard the truth, as a witness under oath in a court of justice.

LETTERS FROM CUBA.

LETTER I.

TO MRS E—— A——.

MATANZAS, FEB. 14th, 1828.

ON the 8th of February, my dear friend, we sailed for Matanzas, and in the morning of the seventh day after leaving Charleston, we descried the high hills of Cuba. The first object discovered, was a circular mount, back of Matanzas, called the Pan. As we drew nearer, a beautiful profile of hills rose to the eye, stretching itself far to the windward and leeward. We at length entered between the capes, into a deep and spacious bay, six miles from the town of Matanzas. It was then about two o'clock. If we had been about two hours later, we might have crossed the shot of a Mexican privateer and a Spanish vessel, which had a rencontre at the mouth of the harbor. The Spanish captain, after seven shot, abandoned his vessel in his boat with five men, and fled to the shore. These circumstances were stated to us by a gentleman, who witnessed the action, and was obliged to sheer off in his own vessel, to avoid the flying shot.

The first near view of land was not very promising. It was covered with a brushy growth, with scarcely a stem of any size. The hill on the right was cleared, and crowned with one or two seats of some taste, though too far to be seen to advantage. Here and there on the shore, which has a uniform appearance, lime-rock rising a few feet above the water, is seen a small cot-

tage, probably the humble abode of fishermen, thatched with palm leaves, and saddled with palm bark. So far as I could see, the shore is rock, as just described, everywhere presenting a tremendous landing for a vessel driven by a tempest.

The first thing discovered as you approach the town, is a fleet of commercial vessels, at anchor in the bottom of the bay, from a half mile to a mile from the warehouses. Nearer the water is shoal, and there is no wharf for the accommodation of commerce. A mole, indeed, is begun, which runs in a straight line for deep water ; but it advances very slowly. It is narrow, but neatly made of faced stone, and at some future day, will be the depot of immense wealth. It is a healthful spot, fanned freely by land and sea breezes, and surrounded by a country of inexhaustible fertility. It should seem, that commerce must ultimately flow to a spot so safe and commodious, in preference to the Havana, that aceldama of seamen.

We came to anchor in the midst of vessels of all nations, and the hum of all tongues ; and soon we discovered the custom house barge, with ten or a dozen oars, with an awning for the men of authority, and its gay streamer, rapidly advancing from the town. The vessel had been prepared for the visit. The decks were scoured, every rope in coil, the pennon floating, the banner displayed. In the cabin too, the carpets were laid, and the wine prepared, and the passengers shaven and adorned. The captain, physician, and interpreter, were soon on deck, making inquiries after our health, remarking the number of passengers, and calling for our passports. For a very sufficient reason we had none to present ; there was no Spanish consul at Charleston. A certificate of the fact was presented ; but we were required to remain on board till the pleasure of the Governor should be known.

Soon, however, my friend, Mr B., heard of my situation, and called on his Excellency, and with Mr W., came to my relief. These gentlemen were lads in Haverhill, when I

left that place, and it was truly delightful to be received by them with a cheering welcome, evincing a vivid recollection of their early friend, and of slight favors conferred when they were at school. There is moral point in the fact, that a little fruit bestowed on the *boy*, should be returned by the *man* in months of generous hospitality and substantial friendship.

It is but a small part of the town of Matanzas, which is seen from the bay, and this lies low, skirting the water. The arches of the custom house attract the eye, and a few other buildings of good size and appearance; the rest is of humble show. But if there be nothing of grandeur in the architecture, there is enough of the novel and grotesque, to seize the whole attention of the stranger, the moment he steps on the mole, and into the street. There had been a small shower, and we seemed treading on mortar in the streets. The buildings were a motley group of all sizes, and of various forms and roofs. The Spanish visage and costume, however, strike you with irresistible humor. It seems a scene of masquerade, and as if all are striving to amuse by the extravagance and oddity of their appearance. *Here*, is ambling by you a Don, with a spur on his shoe, his horse's head low, and his tail tied up in a club; *there*, comes a volante with huge wheels, highly adorned with silver plate, with a boot of broadcloth hitched to the top of the vehicle, as if there were nuns or donnas within, not to be seen by vulgar eyes. This heavy carriage is sometimes drawn by one horse, and sometimes by two, with a postillion in livery, and jack-boots reaching almost to his hips, with a monstrous spur at his heel, and a short whip in his hand, both very freely applied. Sometimes, if the sun be hid, the boot or curtain is dropped, discovering to you two or three gaily dressed and laughing girls, or one or two grave men, lounging in the ample chaise body, for this is the form of the carriage. You withdraw your eyes from the volante, to gaze on a vehicle of an humbler character, on the clumsy cart, with large wheels and a rude body, formed of skins, and perhaps filled with corn, each

ear covered with a thin coat of husks, the state in which they preserve this grain. It is drawn by oxen most strangely harnessed.

A yoke is placed behind their horns at the root, and so fixed to them with fillets and ropes, that they draw or push by their horns without chafing. A rope or thong leads from that gear to the nostril, which is perforated to receive it. A rope thus fastened to the nose of each ox, is sometimes seen in the hand of a man leading the team, as we lead a horse by the bridle : and sometimes the teamster holds the rope in his hand, and walks by the side of the cattle, goading the animals with a ten-foot pole.

There is an infinite variety of caparison to their riding horses, from saddle of leather and plaited stirrup, to a bed of straw tied on by a rope. Their bridles are as various, with and without bit, of leather, rope, and braided grass. But what strikes the stranger with surprise, almost rising into a nervous feeling, is the constant sight of men in armor. It seems as if it was a time of war, and every horseman a vidette. The broad sword dangles by the side of the gentleman, and holsters are inseparable from his saddle. The simplest countryman on his straw saddle, belts on his rude cutlass ; and every man with a skin less dark than an African, appears ready for encounter.

We passed a small distance, and entered Mr B.'s warehouse and bachelor's hall, in what I believe, is called the American Stand. His partner, Mr H., and Mr B. formerly of Beverly, and others speaking good English, gave a New England appearance to things, except that strange sights were passing in the street.

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LETTER II.

TO MRS E—— A——.

LA CAROLINA FEB. 17th, 1828.

You will be anxious to receive the earliest impressions upon my mind in my present very interesting situation. For this reason I retire after some fatigue to devote an hour before I sleep, to prepare a hasty sketch of a day, which will go to Matanzas tomorrow morning, and thence to America on Tuesday.

Last evening I spent in the Bachelor's Hall of Mr B. in Matanzas. After a cold cut in the hall, I retired to bed, but spent an hour in reading the bushel of welcome letters from New England. To their contents I shall not have time particularly to allude. About 11 o'clock I threw myself into a pavilioned bed, the substratum being little more than a sacking bottom, and the covering a sheet, with sometimes the flap of a blanket; the window half up, and the mercury with a fine sea-breeze at 75°. I had a delightful night. About five in the morning, the church-bell tolled for prayers. In about twenty minutes we rose, took a cup of coffee, the very quintessence of the island staple, without any accompaniment. At dawning, the servants took up my baggage, and we repaired to the mole, where the watermen were waiting, and we started down the bay, to the side of the Stranger, and thence entered the most romantic river, I should say, that ever was seen—only that I cannot speak confidently as to that point, there being many romantic rivers which I never have seen. The mouth of it is guarded by a Spanish fort, and the solitary sentinel was pacing his round with a gun on his shoulder, and a high cap on his head. Whether it was that we were rowed by bargemen belonging to the Custom-House, or that we made so innocent an appearance, I cannot say, but we unexpectedly were suffered to pass without a hail. A jest, in Spanish, however, was sent into the fort by one

of the rowers, and we shot up this enchanting stream. The tide in the river is but two feet, and in the bay, little more. Our course was instantly walled in by a lofty bank of nature's masonry, sometimes almost perpendicular, and sometimes with a precipitous slope, I conjecture, fifty, seventyfive, and a hundred feet high. But imagine not that these beetling cliffs appeared in dreary, naked majesty, blackening in a tropical sun. From a few feet in the water, to the top of the height, is a matted growth of cane, and brush, and trees, glossy and brilliant with foliage and flowers, not a plant of which but was a stranger to my eyes. Many of the trees were exceedingly beautiful. The red mango tree runs high with a branchy top, and is as gay and thick with flowers, as an apple-tree in a New England spring. The mahawa has something of a catalpa top, trunk and limb, with a gay red flower, on some of the trees, and a yellow flower on others; and what struck me as a curious anomaly, on some trees were seen flowers, some perfectly red, and some perfectly yellow, so growing naturally, and not by inoculation. In crevices of the rocks, you occasionally discover natural bee-hives, which are found filled with honey, in situations difficult for the human robber to disturb their busy and well ordered commonwealth. The turns in this river are frequent, presenting the most diversified prospects; the bank, now curving into an amphitheatre, and now fluted in the most beautiful swells and hollows, as if the hand of art had been employed. Now you see a little hut of wattled walls and thatched roof, and a narrow bank of a rod or two, flourishing with great beds of salads and cabbages, luxuriant in spite of shade. Here runs into the water a little close fence to wall the pigs from the river, while they enjoy the water, and there a still closer fence, to inclose the fishes, probably at the recess of the scanty tide. A duck came swimming along our passage so fearlessly, that the bargeman might almost have saluted him with his oar, and, when so near, dipping only, not flying. His form was different from all the ducks I have seen. Various birds appeared on wing,

and perch, and on the water, whose forms, and feathers, and names, were all new to me. But, I must not be minute. We at length, after a delightful passage, in the gray of the morning and early sunrise arrived at the head of our boatable navigation. Here we found a number of stores, and boats for the accommodation of the produce of neighboring plantations. Large quantities of sugar, coffee and molasses are here deposited and thence floated to Matanzas. In the principal store we reposed a little while, waiting for our equipage, which had not yet arrived. I was struck with the appearance of the different negroes at work, letting bags of coffee down an inclined plane of twelve or fifteen feet to fill a boat. They were generally furnished with trousers, but their whole contour above the hip, was in an exact state for the study of the painter. I have thought that the negroes in Cuba, if I can so soon judge, are not generally so stout and muscular, as in South Carolina. Some are quite small and short, and some are marked as Africans by their tattooed faces and breasts. In this place, while we were waiting, there arrived three Americans, one of whom recognised me. He was from M——d, a parishioner of our friend the Rev. J. B. and a particular friend, as all his parishioners are. I doubt not he is a fine fellow; he has great fluency of speech, and a great deal of sailor-like frankness and good feeling. He was on his way to see his old townsman Mr K., of whom mention is made in one of your letters. At length we started in our volante, which I will take a future opportunity of describing when I have more time, as it is one of the most singular contrivances for transporting the human frame. On we pushed, with our heavy, easy carriage, with two horses, a blackey astride one of them, and a broadcloth screen extended from the place where our dasher is, to the top of the vehicle, to protect the passengers from an intense blazing sun. We soon came to plantations, now of coffee, now of sugar. The charms of the prospect at every rood, and the variety, it is out of my power to describe, in what of time and paper is left to

me. Carolina in its general appearance is lifeless and dull, compared with almost any spot, since the plantations commenced. You often see a beautiful white stone wall, and sometimes faced, inclosing the plantation from the highway; sometimes a picket fence, withed to a single slab, by a cord cut from the forest, as big as your finger, and drawn as neatly as a cord of hemp; sometimes a living hedge of stakes driven like our willows in a wet place; sometimes a beautiful lime hedge is the fence, and rarely the awkward zigzag Virginia fence, as it is called in the United States, employed as a lively figure to indicate the course of one who sees double. The road is often adorned by a row of those charming and invaluable trees, the palm. These grow to a great height, with a trunk as smooth and polished as if it came from the turner's lathe, from the root to the top, where a few feet of the stem are of a rich, green color, surmounted by a tuft of leaves, which remind you of the plumes adorning the bonnet of a knight of high degree. These often line the broad avenue which leads from the highway to the planter's mansion. They take infinitely more pains to adorn these avenues, than in South Carolina, a few at Goose-Creek excepted. I observed one avenue of lofty bamboos, thickly set, in such a manner as to form a beautiful Gothic arch. For beauty nothing could exceed it, except the live oak. After travelling three or four miles, my friend turned in at his friend's, Mr M.'s, a hospitable German. It seems as if the garden of Eden could not be more beautiful than his grounds. His buildings are handsome, and his house, with piazzas on every side, spacious and airy. Everything around looks like a garden, and borders of wild ipecacuanha, in red blossoms, skirt his walks, and orange trees full of ready fruit, alternating with trees still more ornamental, form his avenues. He was not at home. Mr B. with a liberty freely given, and freely taken, ordered his horses out, and a breakfast, as quick as possible. We had in a few minutes, broiled and fricaseed chickens, and everything else which the

heart could wish. Mr B. next ordered two mules to replace his horses, and at this crisis the host arrived to approve with a cordial greeting all that had been done, and all that was to be done. We started on our last stage, and passed many beautiful plantations, which succeed each other, with little or no intermission. The roads for much of the way, are excellent; sometimes the limestone renders it rough; but a lusty rock is encountered often without fear by the sturdy wheel, and without serious inconvenience to the rider, so singularly constructed is the carriage.

Mr B.'s place is very delightful. A fine walk, with a row of palm trees fronts his place; an avenue of the same leads to his new and handsome buildings. These I shall describe hereafter, as also the grounds. A semicircle of beautiful hills at a few miles distance seems to enclose his prospect. This plantation is yet young, and every year is filling up a picture, which any description of mine will fail to present in all its beauties. My welcome so cordial from the host, has been as much so from his lady. Three sweet children are sporting about the floor, and young Mr I. a great invalid, is receiving the same generous hospitality with myself. With a neighboring planter we sat down to a various and excellent dinner, which closed with a dessert of pines and oranges, figs and raisins, plantains and olives, and delicious guava jelly. Such is the rapid sketch of my present situation. I bless God for his mercy by sea and by land; I rejoice in my removal to a still more auspicious climate, and to a world inexhaustible in novelties. I see nothing old; all is new. It is, as if I were transferred to a new world—to Jupiter or Saturn, to Venus for beauty, to Mars or Mercury for fervor and glow. It seems like gentle summer, fanned with refreshing gales. My spirits are cheerful and equable, and I know not at present anything that I wish altered, except that my heart may be more grateful to God and man.

LETTER III.

TO MRS E—— A——.

LA CAROLINA, FEB. 18th, 1828.

As you approach this plantation, you discover one of the most beautiful and grand objects, that exuberant nature produces in this favored region,—a cotton tree. It is not rare, almost every estate reserves one or more of these trees, in some favorable situation to gratify the eye; for it answers no other human purpose,—it is neither timber nor fuel. The cotton, however, I should not forget, which it yields in a very scanty crop, is sometimes used to stuff a pillow. One on the Santa Ana Estate, towers a hundred feet towards heaven, sixtyfive of which, ascertained by admeasurement, are a smooth cylinder, without a limb or knot, twentyseven and a half feet in circumference, six feet from the ground; and near the base, where it spreads itself in the direction of its principal roots, like a giant bracing himself against the tempest, the fluted trunk has been measured, fortysix feet and a half. Were there nothing to be seen but this noble shaft, with its white smooth surface, it would excite admiration. But at the height already mentioned, it stretches forth its arms, of a size for timber, horizontally and symmetrically, and forms a top, for width and grandeur worthy of the trunk below. It has been measured and found to cover a diameter of one hundred and sixtyfive feet.

This immense tree is a world by itself, and is peopled by its millions. The wild pine-apple colonizes its top. Bajuca, or vines, vegetate on its extended limbs, and run downward to the earth coiling like ropes on the ground, which the thirsty traveller, when water fails him in this land of rare springs, cuts, and the sweet milky juice proves to him a delightful beverage. These vines, very possibly, answer another purpose of nature, who regards with tenderness her humblest offspring. The mice and rats and opossum, who might find it difficult to ascend

the plain surface of the trunk, may easily ascend these natural shrouds, and drink out of the cups of the pines, which stretch their leaves to catch and concentrate the rains and dews in those natural reservoirs.—I said this tree was peopled by its millions. This is quite within bounds; you may see among its branches the commonwealths of the comajen, or wood-louse. They are not peculiar to this tree. Their large black cities are attached to the body or some limb, or safely repose in some fork of the tree, where they are a Chinese population, innumerable. This insect, about the size of a flea, forms a covered way of a mortar of its own, down the trunk to the ground; and as they have different public roads, it is probable that some are for ascending, and others for descending, so that the travellers may not incommode each other. This insect is harmless, and their populous nests are carried whole to the poultry yard, where I have seen hundreds, young and old, enjoying the repast, with all the glee of turkeys in grasshopper time.

On the subject of insects, I will take this opportunity of mentioning the greatest annoyance to the planter, the bibiagua, an ant of half the size of our black ant. These little animals, perfectly insignificant, considered individually, are powerful and formidable in their congregated, or social strength. On the Santa Ana Estate, I witnessed the attempt to disinter and exterminate a tribe of these enemies. Near the house was planted a hedge of campeachy; it is young and flourishing. One morning, Mr S. discovered signs of a nocturnal incursion. Leaves were dropped across the path, and the busy laborers had stripped the campeachy hedge of every leaf for an extent of ten or twelve feet. The retreating enemies were traced by their path some rods on the surface to their entrance into a covered way. Here commenced the digging, and their passage, or arched way, was followed to the depth of sometimes two feet, and sometimes one, until it terminated in a spacious city. This was a collection of cells, in which were deposited masses of eggs, and astonishing numbers of the common

bibiaguas, with a sprinkling of probably queen or mother ants, as we judged them to be, from their royal size, with wings an inch and a half long. They were here in no small confusion, as a stout negro had plunged into the very heart of their citadel, and disregarding their bite, was transferring them, with hand and shovel, to the blazing fire near by, and sometimes kindling with husks a quick flame to destroy them in their cells.

We should, by stopping here, have but a limited view of this ingenious and populous nation. Its metes and bounds, its geographical limits, it is difficult to ascertain with accuracy, as they are subterranean in their highways, and in a great measure in their dwellings. Several cities and villages have been discovered, and the subterranean passages, connecting them in one commonwealth. I should think that from the entrance into the ground to which the marauders of the campeachy were traced, to the last town as yet discovered, may be twenty or thirty rods; and who can tell where we are to look for their metropolis or frontiers?

This devouring insect assails the staple; and they often turn a considerable space in a coffee-field into a desert. Sweet oranges, potatoes, and many of the ornamental trees and shrubs, they strip of their foliage. A steady war of extermination is carried on against them; and on one estate of less than a hundred negroes, two of the laborers were two years constantly employed; and, finally, pretty well succeeded in destroying this formidable enemy.

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LETTER IV.

TO MRS E—— A ———.

LA CAROLINA, FEB. 19th, 1828.

ON Mr T.'s estate, is building and almost done, a fine square of negro huts or boheas. The exterior wall is ten feet high,

and the interior is a little lower, so as to convey off the rain. It is of stone, set in mortar. The apartments are sufficiently large, with a door to shut at pleasure, and a grated window to let in the light and air, and to let out the smoke of the fire, which, within the tropics, they love to light up. The interior walls are plastered, and are not only comfortable, but handsome. The general cook's establishment fronts the gateway entrance; and at night that gateway is effectually closed. The neatness, and even beauty and comfort of these dwellings, recommend the plan to general use; yet in a country where runaways are so difficult to reclaim from the forests and caves, its advantages for securing the tenants from nocturnal rambles, and from temptations to desert, are its highest recommendation. This security is as advantageous to the slaves as to the masters; and therefore is matter of humanity. It promotes regularity of conduct and habits; prevents thieving and conspiracy, and most of those delinquencies, which bring upon them the hunt of men and dogs, the lash, and sometimes the punishment of death.

On this estate there is a handsome coffee store, eightyfour feet square, and twentytwo feet high. Like most of the prudent planters, his domestic accommodation seems to be the last thing provided for. At present, he lives under a palm-covered roof, where the polished manners and hospitality of the family are as delightful, as under ceiled rafters and arched domes.

From Mr T.'s, at an early hour, a party of six gentlemen started for the bay of Cardenas. To bring the fatigue within the capacity of my invalid strength, Mr S. took me in his volante; the rest were on horses. We passed a number of estates, the most considerable were those of Mr C. and Mr P.; and over a road in general excellent, here and there rocky, we arrived at the bay in about fifteen miles. We breakfasted at a tavern store, kept by a Guachenango, (*pron.* Washenango,) a Creole of Indian and European parents.

Over his counter was suspended a sign, inscribed with YANO-SE-FIA-AQUI—"Now, they do not credit here."

It is a noble bay ; stretching inward from the capes, twelve miles ; the capes, Point Yecaco, and Point Piadra, are nine miles distant from each other. The eastern shore is seen at a great distance, scarcely rising above the water. Keys skirt the entrance of the bay, probably breaking the current, which sets to the west, and preventing it from swelling the waters in the bay, where the tide rises but two feet. An island of some extent lies off in the bay, presenting a bluff of twenty or thirty feet high ; and under its protection, a vessel lay at anchor, possibly one of those rovers again waking up, which have been put to sleep by the terror of our navy. Certain it is, that these waters have been frequented by those pirates, who, for a time, were the scourge of our commerce, and the destruction of many of our seamen. The shops at Cardenas, were at that time filled with valuable goods, and mules and horses passed to Matanzas and the interior, richly freighted, while their drivers could answer no questions, except evasively, that they were the cargo of a wrecked vessel. I shall reserve my further remarks on the bay, and our return to Mr T.'s, to a future letter.

In the course of the day, from conversation among the planters, I learned that the negroes from Africa have all a national character of some strength. The Carrobalees are proud ; the Mandingos excellent laborers, large, able and contented, and numerous ; the Gangars, thieves and apt to run, yet good ; they are the most numerous. The Congos are of small stature. The Ashantees very rare here, because powerful in their own country. The Fantee is revengeful, and apt to run away. Those from the Gold Coast, are powerful. The Ebros are less black than others, and of lighter wool.

It is a curious fact in the history of the black man, that it requires one third more medicine to affect his constitution, than that of a white man. His blood is said to be very pure, owing

to the simplicity of his diet, and the regularity of his exercise. A wound on a black man heals quickly. The diseases to which they are most liable, are those of the bowels. They are considerably affected by worms—the tape worm is not unfrequent. A very effectual remedy for worms, the tape worm and all, is spirits of turpentine, a third to a whole glass, followed in a few hours by a cathartic.

It is difficult to preserve any arrangement, as to remarks on various subjects, occasionally touched in conversation by intelligent men. Lest anything valuable should be lost, I shall record them as they occur.

The ecclesiastical state of this important and opulent island, developes itself to the stranger gradually, by facts, some of which are freely reported on Spanish authority, as well as on European and American. A very singular fact in a Catholic country, holding the celibacy of the clergy as indispensable, is, that most of the padres have families; and few of them are bashful on the subject, or think it necessary to speak of their housekeeper as a sister or cousin, or of the children that play about the house, as nephews and nieces. They even go further, and will sometimes reason on the subject, and defend habits contrary to the ecclesiastical authority, upon principles of nature and common sense. Certainly an unnatural and unscriptural imposition, which is so unblushingly evaded, should not be attempted to be enforced; but should be revoked. The fearless violation of one law of a community weakens the authority of the whole statute book.

Of some of the padres, the morals, in other respects, are quite as glaringly corrupt, as in the particular just mentioned. They are bold, eager, and contemptible gamblers. They go from the table to mass, and from mass to the table; and I do not speak on light authority, nor without unquestionable examples, when I say, that some have been known to *delay mass*, to see the end of a cock fight, and to pit their own cock against

the cock of any slave in the circle who has an ounce or a rial to lay on his head.

Such degradation of the sacred ermine is attended with contempt, and with something like a sentiment of indignation in the community, and this without distinction of European, American or Creole. It has the worst influence on the cause of religion, whether Catholic or Protestant. The influence of the clergy is on the wane, and from the habit of mankind, however unreasonable, of confounding the religion itself with the character of its professors, and especially of its ministers, it brings Christianity, heaven-born and spotless as it is, into suspicion, and exposes it to desertion by the young and unreflecting. It is confidently believed by those who are better informed than strangers can be, that infidelity is becoming common in the island, more especially among the rising generation; that there is observable a growing neglect of forms; that in processions with the Host, the sons often remain covered, where their fathers spread a white handkerchief on any spot, dry or wet, in the street, and dropped on their knees; that even when they conform to the customs of their fathers and of the church, in faith or ceremony, they often speak of both as superstitious. It is much to be feared that in bounding from the indefensible things in the catholic form of Christianity, they may depart also, from the faith once delivered to the saints, in its divine form, expressed in words which the Holy Ghost has taught. May God avert such evils, and the scenes witnessed in France be prevented in Spain and her colonies.

There are two distinct codes of laws, which govern the island, the civil and ecclesiastical. By the latter, baptism is required of blacks and whites. In regard to foreigners, however, this law is not rigidly enforced. Neglect is winked at, and passes sub silentio. The padres, the best of them, stand ready to give certificates of christian character, without much examination into faith or manners, more especially if the applicant has subscribed to the building of the city or village church. Pecun-

niary evidence is highly satisfactory, and with many weighs heavier than *judgment, faith, and the love of God*. The padres have an interest in baptism, receiving seventyfive cents fee, a part of which goes to the bishop, and the rest is their perquisite. And this is very considerable when whole plantations are baptized. There is a season of the year, I know not which, when for a few days they are entitled to but three bits, that is, half price. If, however, the prudent planter would avail himself of this economy, the padre is usually *mal*, indisposed, or engaged in another direction. Some planters, who wish to conform to the law, and yet do it prudently, have a negotiation with the padre ; and he performs the service by job and at a discount.

While many of the padres fully deserve the censures lavished upon them, some are said to be amiable, and in general correct and respectable men. I hear the bishop of Havana spoken of in terms of high respect. His princely income is munificently expended in mercy, and in beautifying the city, where he resides. He is said to be a man of liberal views ; too much so to suit the high toned feeling of ecclesiastics at home and in the colony. He has been once recalled ; but the sentiment of the community was in his favor, and certificates from physicians that it would be dangerous to his health to remove, have preserved him to the diocese. His name is Juan Diaz de Espalando.

From a person interested in the transaction, I have a curious fact relative to the removal of the bones of Lieut. Allen, to the United States. He fell in an action with the pirates, and was buried at Camiraoca. As he was buried with Catholic rites, he could not be disinterred without them. An order was obtained from the ecclesiastical authority, with a proviso, that no other bones but his should be disturbed. On calling on the ecclesiastic at Matanzas, the merchant to whom the business was entrusted, readily obtained his services by the promise of six ounces ; and as he threw no difficulties in the way, and through-

out the whole, conducted so handsomely, he paid him nine ounces, that is, one hundred and fiftythree dollars.

LETTER V.

TO MRS E—— A ——.

LA CAROLINA, FEB. 23d, 1828.

It will be perfectly in vain for me to think of responding to all the kind letters I have received from home, seriatim, or individually. A precious pile of nineteen lies before me, and all from persons whom I sincerely love, and to each one of whom, I feel grateful for their affectionate contributions to my comfort in a strange land. I persuade myself, that the dear group of my correspondents under my own roof, will cheerfully rest satisfied with a family letter, addressed to their common and loved head ; and that through this simple medium they will indulge me to breathe upon them the glowing affection of my parental bosom, and invoke upon them, as I most devoutly do, the blessing of our common Father in heaven.

Again, I am promised the favor of a friend to call at my residence in Beverly, to deliver my letters, and to answer your thousand questions concerning the husband and father. The visit of Mr H. I hope you have already received, or will shortly receive. This will be presented to you by Mr W. of P. one of the pleasant passengers with whom I embarked at Charleston, for Matanzas, and who has conducted himself towards me with the kindness and courtesy, which deserves the best acknowledgments of my family. Whatever of fruit, or liquors, or offices of support and accommodation, could contribute to my comfort on the voyage, Mr W. has rendered ; and his last office of kindness, the calling upon me in the country, twentyone miles from Matanzas, to take my letters and commands to you, is best of all.

Tomorrow will complete my first week in the interior, and today, my first week in the island. I am perplexed to know what to say, and what to omit of this week's history. First of all, however, as it is the point of chief interest to us all, let me mention its influence on my health. I have no doubt that it is the most favorable week, in this regard, since I left New England. I have not been weighed since I left Charleston; but I am satisfied I have improved in health. I sleep more naturally, and soundly, and uniformly. My spirits are cheerful and equable. My appetite is uniformly good. * * * * * This brief statement is worth the voyage to the island to attain, even though my cough is not entirely quieted, nor my strength fully restored. I bless God that he has guided my steps to this delightful spot, and these fragrant and balmy airs; and that he has in this neighborhood, and more especially in this family, introduced me to the most cheering enjoyments of hospitality and friendship.

Will you have the routine of a day at La Carolina? I rise a little after day-break, and retire to my bed a little after nine in the evening. At sunrise I observe the thermometer, and find the mercury at from 64 to 74°; in the course of the day it may rise to 87°; but we are comfortable on account of delightful breezes. At sunrise, a servant brings to my chamber a cup of coffee, which, diluted somewhat from the *essence* drank by the family, I find delicious and refreshing, and not followed by the ill effects, which deterred me from the use of it in New England. This is immediately followed by fruit, the correcter of whatever evils I might otherwise have felt from the coffee. The fruit is a plate of bananas and oranges. The first of these is now become almost preferred, by me, to the last. It is said not to agree with all persons; but I am persuaded that it is as salutary as it is pleasant to me. The orange in the morning is undoubtedly excellent in its effects, and I need not tell A. how delicious it is; nor need I awaken her regrets, and those of the other listeners to the reading of this letter, by remarking

that I see this delightful fruit perishing on the ground and trees, for the want of use. After my beverage and fruit, I sit down to my table and perform what of writing I can till breakfast, as it is a season as delightful as you can well imagine. About nine o'clock we meet in the breakfast parlor, and sit down to a table of various meats, sweet potatoes, hominy, johnny-cakes, New England bread and butter, (family bread,) eggs, variously cooked, and *long cork claret*. As a parting ceremony at the breakfast table, not an attendant, or an essential as with us, a cup of coffee is proffered, but I think not generally accepted. By the way, as wine always excited coughing in me, you may fear the long cork in this meal. But claret has not the same effect; it is a cooling and excellent beverage taken freely at all meals, and at all hours of the day.—I was going on with the other meals of the day, but was agreeably interrupted by a visit, not the first by several, from the interesting Mr C. author of letters from Europe, some specimens of which went the rounds of the newspapers before they appeared in the form of a volume. He has been on the island a month or more, and much of that time has been spent in this neighborhood. I am delighted with him; and as I must go to Havana sooner or later, we have concluded to go together, and to go by land. We have some friends on the way, and shall probably pick up others by letters, and whatever is curious and interesting we shall endeavor to see. * * * * * I am this evening to go to a plantation belonging to Mr T. a Baltimorean, to spend the night, and tomorrow. Yesterday we dined and took coffee with Mr W.'s family, of Connecticut, and very interesting.

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LETTER VI.

TO MRS E—— A——.

LA CAROLINA, FEB. 26th, 1828.

THIS day has been crowded with incidents and observations deserving of record. A small party of three gentlemen on horseback and two ladies in the volante, Mr S. and Mr C. the tourist, and Mrs S. and her niece, and myself, started in the gray of the morning for the mountains of Hatillo, the name of the region of Mr J.'s Sugar Estate. About a mile onward near the estate of —— we saw the battle ground of 1825, where a few gentlemen by uncommon daring, killed a few, and put to flight six or seven hundred insurgent negroes. On this occasion Mr C. was particularly distinguished. He is a gentleman of a noble figure; and may have been prompted to an onset, in which destruction must have been certain, if resolution had been in proportion to numbers, by the scenes of St Domingo, where his family lost their whole property, and escaped narrowly from their blazing home. Mr C. and his brother, then little children, were snatched from the ruins by a faithful servant, who fled with them to the mountains. Four gentlemen, if I mistake not, put the whole multitude to rout, and arrested the rebellion in its beginning.

Our ride was cool and delightful, by pleasant plantations, through shady forests of trees new to me, the larger often dressed like a ship, with vegetable cordage, and adorned by the parasitical wild pine-apple, like bird's nests, scattered among the branches; sometimes we wound our course round the base of conical mountains, rearing their proud heads, like beautiful domes, almost to the clouds. We passed here and there across the dry beds of what will be rivers when the rainy season shall pour its confluent streams from the mountains. We scented in the gale, nearly a mile before it was visible, a vast sugar estate, and were astonished to see the vast extent of luxuriant cane on

every side of us. It is the grinding season ; and long before we arrived near the mill, the deafening din of the teamsters reached us, cheering and goading ten pair of oxen, to produce a whirl of the cast iron nuts, through which the cane is passed and repassed, while a half dozen negroes are diligently employed in feeding the insatiable devourer. We took but a passing glance of the buildings belonging to the establishment, which will probably send to market from sixty to a hundred thousand dollars worth of clayed sugars this season.

After some mistakes, which added to the distance and the pleasure of our ride, we were welcomed with generous hospitality by the planter of the Mountains of Hatillo ; and passed in his interesting family, and with his accomplished mother, now on a visit, a delightful day.

After a superb breakfast highly enjoyed with an appetite eager from a ride of ten or eleven miles, we sallied out to survey an extensive *sugar plantation*. Two volantes accommodated the ladies ; the gentlemen first repaired to the mill, to witness a busy scene. A huge boiler filled with grits was preparing dinner for the laborers on the spot. A negro close by with a mill turned by a crank, was providing the raw material. Two mills, with ten or twelve oxen harnessed in each, with a driver to each pair on the outside, and a general whipper on the inside, and a yell from the whole, which defies description, were keeping the mill in quick motion. When the cane had passed through the first pair of nuts, it was turned back again through the second pair, (the middle nut being one of each pair) by six wooden rollers called dumb turners, revolving parallel with the nuts. The juice fell copiously into an inclined trough, and passed off rapidly in an under ground conductor, to join the confluent stream of the other mill. Together in a rapid and respectable tide, it disgorges itself into a reservoir, in the boiling section of this vast building, one story lower than the level of the mills. The mills in this manner deliver 500 gallons in twentyfive minutes.

From the reservoir, the juice is next passed by a duct, to a large copper kettle, containing 500 gallons, under which is kept a hot fire of wood ;—into this mass three tumblers of lime are thrown, as a refining process. Here it boils with violence, and rises crowned with froth and bubbles, and as it is prone to overleap the limits of the kettle, there is a second rim rising higher, which controls the stray fluid and leads it into a reservoir close by, which may be called the save-all, for safe keeping.

The next step is to transfer the refined juice into a duct, which conveys it into a tank, where the impurities sink to the bottom. Thence it passes by an easy conveyance to take its course through a row of three kettles, over a fire, a gentler fire of dried ground cane. From the first kettle it is dipped out into the second by a negro with a copper bucket attached to a long pole, which operation he performs by means of a moving skid, with dexterity and tolerable ease. From the third kettle it is transferred to a tank, or large trough, against the wall, with a guard of boards on each side, that nothing may be lost. It is here brought to a state of granulation by two negroes, one at each end of the trough, dashing with the bucket on the pole back and forth, and up and down, till it is felt or seen to be graining. It is at this trough that strangers and negroes have free access to cake off the sugar for their entertainment ; and invalids find it salutary to inhale the fumes of the neighboring kettles.

In this state of granulated liquid, the precious mass is taken in an iron bucket to the pans, arranged in rows over an inclined plane. The pans are first wetted, that the sugar may not stick to them ; and are in the form of an inverted cone, with a hole at the bottom, which is stopped by a plug and husks, but not so tight as to prevent the molasses from oozing out, and falling on an inclined plane, placed like a roof beneath, and running into casks below. Negroes returning from the field are required to call as they pass, and take each a pan of sugar to the purging house, so called, till they are all removed. Here we will leave

the pans for the present, to complete our view of the mill and boiling house. Passing to the end of the building we look into the furnaces under the respective kettles, and find all are fed with dry cane, which has been through the mill, except the central fire under the clarifying kettle, which is heated hotter than the rest with wood. Great quantities of cane fuel are housed at hand, lest rain should unfit it for use. I may just remark that the negroes wear sandals in this business; and that the pots, about to receive the granulated juice are wet to prevent its sticking, and that from the central clarifying boiler, the same process goes on to the granulating tank, both on the right and left.

In passing to the *purging house*, we discovered a negro goading a pair of superannuated oxen, who were incapable of harder labor, round a post in the centre of a little pit, six or eight feet in diameter, for the purpose of treading liquid clay. Everything, of course, looked filthy enough. In this dirty hole is produced the mighty agent, through whose pollution purity is produced, and snowy whiteness is imparted to the dark muscovado.

In the neighboring building, we saw it standing in rows, with the lower part of the cone in a hole, to drop the molasses again upon an inclined plane, which conveys it to a vat holding 30,000 gallons. We saw 7000 pans, each holding from 35 to 50 lbs. of sugar. On the top of the sugar in the pan a portion of the clay from the pit is placed, and by its magical power, it drives the molasses downward till the greatest part of the cone becomes white, and the bottom becomes tinged with a slight molasses color. The clay comes off from the top entirely in a cake, perhaps an inch thick. The pots are once more removed to a drying house; the white sugar is then severed from the darker, and cut and broken into small pieces, and exposed to the sun in driers on truckles, that in a moment they may be run under a roof in case of rain. The same is done by the darker sugar; and both are next removed to the store, and

boxed for the market, and sent eighteen miles, by land, on mules or in carts, to the Embarcadera, and thence by the Canimar to Matanzas, twelve miles.

Five hundred gallons of juice yield about three hundred pounds of clayed sugar; and as that quantity of the liquid flows from the nuts in twentyfive minutes; and the operations of the mills and furnaces being simultaneous, and so managed that one part shall not wait day or night for the other, this mill and furnace establishment must send to the purging-house, the driers, and the boxes, more than 700 lbs. of clayed sugar in an hour; 16,800 lbs. must be boxed each day, and something like 1,000,000 lbs. to speak loosely, in a season.

The molasses of this establishment is a heavy article, and would be an important item in the profits of the plantation, if the cartage did not nearly consume its price. The planter designs to set up a distillery on the premises, to raise the price, and diminish the carting of this branch of the economy of the plantation.

The buildings on this estate, (and *very small* is the sum, which the *palace* has cost the owners) have been reared at an expense of more than \$50,000. Though there are estates vastly larger than this, for its income, this may almost be esteemed a principality. When every expense has been deducted from the product of the 2000 acres, it leaves a net income of \$50,000 per annum.

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LETTER VII.

TO MRS A—— E—— G——.

LA CAROLINA, FEB. 28th, 1820.

You have been so unremitted in your epistolary kindness, notwithstanding your infirmity of health, that I address to you a hasty effusion by the present opportunity. And this, the rather

because one object is to announce to you the kindness of a friend, who has requested me to accept for my family a barrel of oranges, a fruit of which you are peculiarly fond. Should they arrive in good condition, you will have opportunity of judging of my every day's pleasures in this land of tropical luxury. Mr S. is the generous friend to whom we are indebted for this present. He is a Connecticut gentleman, on one of the most highly ornamented and beautiful coffee estates in this vicinity, with whom I am to pass a few days as soon as I can find time. The fact is that I am solicited in so many directions, that I am perplexed so to manage as to give no offence ; in other words, to accept invitations with as much courtesy as they are given.

Hoping at my return to give you some more minute account of events and things than can be done in hasty letters, I shall at present content myself with some hints only of the ten days which have elapsed since I landed, or rather of the few days since the date of my last letter to you. On the evening of the 23d, I went to Mr F.'s, a gentleman from Maryland, a friend and contemporary of our friend Mr P. He has a very pleasant and well educated family, and particularly his son, who received a French education at Geneva, and whose fondest local attachments are to the place of his education. They have 500 acres, one third in forest, two thirds cultivated with coffee and provisions ; ninetyfive negroes, and raise 2000 quintals of coffee per year. Their well is 150 feet deep, surrounded with tanks for horses, negroes, and the family. You will be surprised with the depth of this well. But they sometimes sink the shaft, and a great part of it through rock, 300 feet deep ; the greatest depth I have heard of is 360 feet. Here, I touch the defect of the island ; rivulets and brooks are almost unknown in this quarter ; wells are with great difficulty and expense obtained, and most plantations rely on the clouds of heaven for this first essential of life, which, on coffee estates they contrive to treasure up in large tanks, filled by the confluent streams of their coffee-driers. They are now building on Mr T.'s estate,

a range of boheas, or negro huts. They are of limestone and mortar, ten feet high, forming a square, and the doors opening inward; the entrance is through a large gate, secured by night; the whole comfortable, and even handsome, and very safe. While the negroes are to live in plastered houses, you will think of a superb mansion for their master. He lives under a thatched roof, the winds blowing through his hall, with humble recesses at the side, for bed-chambers; and were this house in England, it would cost him no tax for the light of heaven. But it is usual for these planters, with judicious economy, to reclaim the forest, plant their coffee trees, build their store and out houses, and beautiful driers, and even plant their ornamental walks, before they lavish time and expense on their own mansion. Even the Yankees, famed as they are for Scotch shrewdness, might take an admirable lesson from this order and economy of things.

On the following day, by concert among five or six gentlemen, a party set out for Cardenas Bay, about fifteen miles distant, to show to Mr C. and myself, a spot, which is likely to become shortly as considerable a depot as Matanzas, and possibly as Havana itself.

The bay of Cardenas is very capacious, extending nine miles from cape to cape, and is twelve miles deep in its indentation. A singular phenomenon is discovered in the shoal water near the shore; living springs of fresh water boil up; and one of our company, accustomed to bathe in the place, had inhaled the water at the bottom, and found it sweet. Four vessels lay off at anchor; a few rude stores, roofs only, stood on the shore, filled with molasses and honey. Two *tavern stores*, not as richly and variously furnished as when the rovers made business plenty, were, however, driving a profitable traffic. Charcoal, in bags, for Havana, lies exposed at a place which is an *apology* for a wharf, and timber, some mahogany, more cedar, lay about the neighboring ground. In this spot, thus described, the Governor is now setting up a *custom-house*—and there can

No doubt, it will, at no distant day, become a place of considerable commerce. There is a plantation country around, and the produce will seek the nearest water carriage. There are some estates not far distant, which pay ten thousand a year for transportation to the landing at the fork of the Canemar. It costs from three to four dollars for the transportation of a box of sugar.

The six gentlemen, with horses and servants, invited themselves to dine with Mons. le J., and were received with evident cordiality and pride. Mr T.'s house may answer a description of this mansion. Suspended over the table is the *India fan*, which, pulled by a cord, answered the double purpose of dispersing the flies, and cooling the guests. An extensive green was lively with poultry, and the pick of them graced our table. The gentlemen, with French ease, cast themselves, when fatigued, on beds in the recesses, or nodded in the piazzas, or examined a flourishing garden, or walks of fruit and ornamental trees, or the field of pine apples, or chatted with the lively and sensible inmates of the family, until the descending sun admonished us to take up our line of march for St Jose.

I passed a second night at Mr T.'s, and in the morning, with his son, on horseback, examined this fine estate. Thirty acres of plantain yield an astonishing quantity of excellent food. Great quantities of corn are raised among the coffee trees. The negroes increase the variety of their food by the product of *their own* land. They raise melanga, the top for salad, the bottom for a change for plantain. We saw lucerne and guinea grass for cattle; the former fattens horses; they grow poor on the latter. We saw bibiaguerras, (ant nests,) most of which, however, in this well conducted estate, had been dug up; a lime kiln burning; a cocoa pit, from which is dug up an essential ingredient in their mortar; the mouth of a cave, the bottom of which has not been explored; thrifty lime hedges, and avenues traversing the estate at right angles, set with palms, and I know not how many species of flowering trees and shrubs; and returned to the mansion to breakfast. * *

LETTER VIII.

TO MRS A—— E—— G——.

LA CAROLINA, FEB. 27th, 1828.

I WAS invited yesterday, to a new enterprise, by my never weary and excellent friend, Mr S. The object was, to visit Mr J., and a *sugar estate*. We had a delightful ride in the cool of the morning, of about ten miles. The birds sang among the branches; and the noisy parrots, tamed into contentment among us with a perch on a chair, or in a cage, scaled the loftiest trees in pairs. *Here*, the coffee-field was whitening into a wide sheet of fragrant snow; *there*, we passed at the base of a shaggy cone, four or five hundred feet high. After some fortunate mistakes, which extended our ride, and increased the variety, we arrived and were welcomed most cordially. I have given in another letter a minute account of this interesting day, and you will there find an exact history of clayed sugar in its progress from a *tide* of juice issuing from the mills, to its granulation, claying, and boxing. This is a vast estate, yielding this year sixtyfive thousand dollars; wrought by a gang of one hundred and eighty negroes, great and small; kept in health, by plenty of food and clothing, plenty of labor and recreation, and the attendance of a physician every day, at a salary of four hundred dollars per annum. They have one hundred and ten yoke of oxen, estimated to be worth thirteen thousand dollars; two only of several large buildings contain fiftysix thousand, seven hundred feet of shingled roof. They have a pottery to make their pans and tiles, and one hundred and eighty thousand bricks have been made in the year. If you except the fields of luxuriant cane, and three or four volantes, there is nothing ornamental on the estate. All is business and great results. There are scattered palms, but no avenue; a river, River Nuevo, over which a cat might jump, and not disgust her paws. There is a beautiful spring impregnated with

sulphur, roofed with palm leaves, banked and bottomed with plank, perfectly convenient for bathing, and the waters salubrious. Mr J. came to the island at two years old, and is married to a Spanish lady, who has given him three pretty children. His mother is on a visit to her son from a coffee estate, lying between Matanzas and Havana; she is an accomplished and opulent American widow. Our hospitality was of the Spanish character. Everything was on a generous scale, and great courtesy and cordiality prevailed. * * * *

It is really my hope to embrace an invitation made and repeated, and urged to visit them again.

We returned in the cool of the day, and to diminish my fatigue; and in spite of my earnest remonstrances, I was sent home two or three miles, in Mr S.'s volante, with my horse tied behind. My only difficulty, among these eagle eyed friends, is to limit their kindness. I am like the sailor crossing the line, almost made to swear that I will not walk when I can ride, nor eat brown bread when I can get white, nor touch any secondary thing while there is a first which is better.

My friends Mr and Mrs B., have set out this morning for Bemba, to a christening, where Mrs B. has been solicited to stand godmother. The distance is more than three leagues, and I declined their invitation to attend them. I shall probably witness the baptism of the only daughter of this family, which makes me the less regret the loss of this excursion. I would suggest some curious remarks on Catholic baptism, only I hope for a better occasion, and I have now no room. I must give you, however, a brief account of this caravan, or travelling family, as they appeared starting from our green. The fair skinned party were Mr and Mrs B., Mrs O., lady of the *captain* of this *circle*, an office involving all civil and military power within its limits; Mr C. and the three children. They were attended by the body servant of Mrs B., her *factotum*, gaily dressed, and on a sidesaddle; a little girl, to mind the infant, sitting behind the volante; a postillion in livery, and two ser-

vants with sumpter horses, and large panniers filled with *trunks* and all other things needful for two or three days. Two mules to relieve the horses in the volante, were tied by their long halters to the clubbed tail of one of the sumpter horses, jerking, and playing their gambols behind and sideways, to the great endangering of the long haired honors of that nobler animal; and a gentle pony, handsomely caparisoned for the ladies, if they should wish to mount, was in the same manner made fast to the other. In the latter case, the one horse being spurred by his rider, and the other, though having little to carry being reluctant to go, the tail of the one horse, and the head of the other, were brought to a level line. The glittering volante, the gentlemen on horseback, knights in armor, with pistols and broad swords, with the rest, already described, were an exhibition as grotesque and as splendid, as it was amusing and novel to me.

* * * * * The kindness of this family is delightful. It seems the pleasure of this neighborhood to do all in their power for invalids. Every year they have more or less of these unfortunate beings among them; I am the second in this family, and there have been many more in this neighborhood during this season from America. I have the pleasure to assure you that I am daily improving in health and strength; through the great goodness of God, I am able to exercise to some degree of fatigue, eat well, sleep in general well, and trust I am invigorating a debilitated constitution in a manner which may enable me to be further useful to my family and people. My cough is not absolutely extinct; I do not think I have reason to expect that it will be so, till the tabernacle itself shall be taken down. The cough is eleven years old. But experience since my former excursion to the south, leads me to hope that it may be kept at bay by *general* good health, and care not to *overdo*, as I did last summer; to avoid particular exposure, to be regular in exercise, and, if possible, in sleep, &c, &c. O! I now long, if it may please my Master, to do him, and the cause of

Christ service, and to be a blessing to my family and my affectionate people. A flood of tenderness comes over me when I think of you all in this distant land. All the strange and beautiful scenes around me cannot divert my thoughts from "*home, sweet home,*" for any length of time. "*There is no place like home.*" I care not who may smile at my weakness. It is manly, and christian, to *melt* in thinking of the dearest country on the globe, the freest people on the earth, and the most enlightened portion, (take them as a whole,) of the human family, and the most moral. Faults they have, and very many. There is civil dissension, and party violence; there is ecclesiastical jealousy, and unchristian intolerance, of which we ought to be ashamed, and from which we ought to abstain, portending dangers to the commonwealth and the church, and at which the finger of scorn or of triumph is pointed from lands of civil and ecclesiastical despotism. But, America, "with all thy faults, I love thee still," and more than all, the land of the pilgrims, and the spot, where the trees, planted by the hand of Endicott, still, by their shade and fruits, cheer his descendants, and the free and liberal sentiments breathed into the civil and ecclesiastical polity of olden time, are the stamina of church and state.

* * * * I am ready to blame myself for the length of this epistle. But I am garrulous when I look homeward, and besides, if I can do anything to cheer the family, I owe it fully to their unwearied assiduity in cheering me. Let no vessel come to Matanzas without letters; and if sent to Havana, I shall get them as easily as you get them from Providence or New York. To all who ask, remember me affectionately. I hope all things go on well in the parish—that the sick are better, the well happy, and all desirous to see their pastor, who longs to see them. A Dios,—adieu—The blessing of heaven rest on those I love.

LETTER IX.

SUMIDERO, MARCH 1st, 1828.

A PARTY of five gentlemen, Messrs C., S., W., and son, and myself, set out at sunrise, for the mountains of Hacana, so beautifully visible on the south from most of the estates of the Partido of Sumidero. After a cool and delightful ride through estates and forests, over a good horse road, we arrived in the bleak Savanna at the foot of the highest of them. We declined examining the sulphur spring in the neighborhood, to save the morning hours for the more arduous purpose of the ascent. The savanna presents a sterile, yet not uninteresting view. Its growth is little more than blighted grass and bushes, the palmetto and palmetier, a tree which runs from thirty to forty feet high, having a stem only three or four inches diameter, with a palmy top, curiously wrapped round at the insertion and below the leaves with a natural web, in which the leaves cross each other in diamonds.

Much of the height we ascended on our horses, and securing them to palmettos we soon attained the first peak of the highest row, and passed from peak to peak, in what we supposed the trail of wild negroes, through grass and bushes, quite luxuriant, to the summit of the most elevated, which is estimated variously from 1500 to 2000 feet above the level of the sea. Delightful views opened upon us, standing on this natural observatory. A savanna east, and another west, stretched a few miles at our feet, walled in by a necklace of hills, less high than that on which we stood. Beyond these, the eye rested on about thirty sugar estates, easily discerned by the lively green of the cane, glittering in the sun. The coffee estates were still more numerous; but the avenues, with which they are adorned, set with palm, and orange, mango and other trees, both fruitful and beautiful, and shrubs and bushes of gorgeous flowers, were too distant to

exhibit their charms to advantage. The Sumidero in most parts of the circle, appears in high cultivation.

We were not altogether fortunate in the morning, a thin fog lingering in the horizon. But the ocean was perfectly visible at the bay of Cardenas, and the sheet of water between the shore and the island in the bay, and the form of the island, lying northeast at the distance of about twenty miles. We expected to see the Caribbean sea, lying southwest. In a clear day it is distinctly seen at the distance, by estimation, of twenty five miles ; but it remained a little doubtful to the last, whether *we* saw the water, the fog not wholly clearing away. It is certain, however, that the eye here spans the island at a single station ; and the observer can entertain no doubt that a line of forty five or fifty miles would reach from the Caribbean to the Atlantic. From this peak the heights of Camiraoca are seen in the range of the La Carolina, Mr B.'s estate. The mountains extend in an irregular way, W. 120 miles, N. 20, S. 5, and E. about 6 miles. Beyond this limit, to the east, the island is a level country about 300 miles, and from sea to sea.

As natural canals, and rivers, are rare, and the expense of transporting the bulky articles to market is often more than half their value, canals and rail-ways, at no distant day, may be expected to intersect the most fruitful and practicable parts of the island.

The mountains of Hacana, except the tops of some of them, present a naked appearance. The sweet pea ; a beautiful rose on a myrtle-leaved vine, deep red, with a border on the under side of the petals ; a species of aloes, with a stem, ten or fifteen feet high, called by the Spaniards, *pinea de sacra*, or hedge aloes ; the night-blooming cereus, shooting its roots into the rocks, and winding about on their crags ; were the most considerable vegetables we saw upon them. Between two or three of the peaks, the grass was high, and would have impeded our walk, had we not discovered the negro *trail*, before mentioned. Bibiguas, so formidable in the cultivated valley and cham-

paign, are miners on the highest peaks, and throw out a rich heavy earth, which, we judged, might very probably well answer the office of paint. We had not leisure to examine more than the surface of the mountains, except where these indefatigable laborers had thrown out their excavations. It is very possible that others have penetrated deeper, and discovered riches, concealed from common eyes, as it is stated that the proprietor of the savanna and mountains has refused \$500 a cavalleria, (33 1-3 acres,) for this sterile earth and rocks. The turkey buzzard scales in his flight around these peaks; and in spite of the law of public sentiment in India, and in Carolina, and I believe, also, in this island, in favor of these natural scavengers, one of their number had fallen a victim to a rifle, and we saw his carcass unburied on the peak.

We descended from the mountains, and passing round the conical base of the eastern end, and through a savanna at the north of them, and crossing the — sometimes a dry bed, and sometimes containing water, to which the thirsty oxen on the roads, and the animals of some neighboring plantations repair in this drought of water, we reached the Sumidero to breakfast at almost the dinner hour.

* * *

LETTER X.

TO Mr W — E — A —.

MARCH 2d, 1828.

* * * Being in a family, which had received a printed invitation to what is strangely called in common parlance, the christening of a sugar estate, I attended the gentlemen of the family to witness the religious ceremonies according to Catholic usage. This ceremonial takes place when a new sugar estate has been planted, the necessary buildings erected,

and the commencing of the grinding is proposed. A padrena and madrena, or godfather and godmother, are engaged for the occasion. The padre, or parish priest, and another priest of a higher order in the church, but who had retired from active service were also present. A large circle of Spanish gentlemen and some French and Americans accepted the invitation.

Wishing only to attend the religious ceremonial, we delayed going too long, and were disappointed of seeing it. We were informed, however, that the madrena was absent, being sick, and the padrena performed her part. The ceremonial on the part of the priest, was extremely brief, amounting to this:—"In the name of God, go on and prosper." After the benediction, a team of ten oxen started, and the padrena, applied the first cane to the nuts, and their humble laborers, the men in white frocks, the women in negligent robes of the same fabric, continued the labor.

At our arrival all was glee and rejoicing. The negroes entered into their task with somewhat more of spirit than skill. They cheered, and whipped, and goaded the oxen; some brought the cane; others fed the nuts; one or two stood at the back side to return the cane through the second pair of nuts, their smooth iron surfaces revolving so nearly together that you could hardly see between them; and others again received the cane as it fell, and distributed it in the path of the oxen, or carried it out in baskets to dry for fuel. The kettle was soon filled, the fire was kindled, and the process of making sugar was begun. In the midst of this busy, tumultuous, and noisy scene, a loud shriek at the mill, and a sudden stop of the oxen, and an instant dead silence, and a countenance of horror, announced an accident, the very accident predicted by more than one. The hand of the man who was feeding the return nuts was caught, and his fingers and thumb drawn in nearly to the joint of the palm before the team could be arrested. The thumb was severed, and the fingers in little better condition. The poor fellow sunk down, as soon as his hand was disengaged, and

four of his companions bore him to the boiling room, and extended him upon a board. Here such administrations were made as the best advice on the spot suggested, and a messenger was despatched for a surgeon. In the mean time the most exquisite sympathy was felt by the company, and the countenance of joy was in a moment turned to sadness. The sufferer uttered no murmur or groan. He was the oldest negro on the estate; and besought of his master the office, to which it is expected he will fall a martyr, as in such cases of injury to a black, a lockjaw usually ensues.

The business at the mill and kettles was again resumed; but for some space of time, the cheering of the oxen, and the eagerness to get on rapidly were suspended. I was anxious to retire, but was told it would give offence, if we did not remain to dine. The table was set by the side of the mill, and the oxen in their rounds passed near some of the guests without a board between them. A superb dinner was served up in three courses to, I think, forty or fifty gentlemen. The head of the table was graced by a beautiful woman, who is married to the son of a Spanish Marquis, and was supported by another lady. As they came from a retired apartment and approached the head of the table, the Americans rose to receive them with courtesy, which Seniors M. noticed gracefully.

It seems not the Spanish custom to render special attention to ladies; at least it was not discoverable on this occasion. Little conversation was made with them. I could observe no pains in arranging the guests. A Spanish Count, I believe the only nobleman at the table, sat half way down towards the foot, and a cidevant secretary of the ex-king of Spain, sat where he could find a place; and was only distinguished by his superior wit and vivacity. All, however, was ease, and attention to the guests, by the partners in the plantation, who gave the entertainment, and by the guests to one another.

The extensive table was *covered closely* with a surprising variety of dishes, in the Spanish style of cookery. Flesh, fish,

and fowl were so disguised, that scarcely an old acquaintance could be discerned. A roast turkey and a roast fowl preserved their shape, not their usual flavor. A plate of everything was passed round the table, with the expectation that each would take something for himself, of all, or such as he chose. They were highly seasoned, and scarcely a dish had escaped without a plentiful infusion of garlic.

When the first course had been partaken, each one left the table, as he pleased, and if I mistake not, many employed the interval with a cigar. A superb dessert was then set on the table, in probably a hundred dishes, and an abundance of champagne; and the gentlemen returned to the table, taking seats without reference to their former location. They partook of the most delicate sweetmeats, most of which were new to me. In drinking wine, a loud shouting and knocking on the table was a call for a toast. The noisy team was stopped. Mr M. rose and gave an impromptu in metre, of which his musical language is easily susceptible, with an animated and graceful air, which was received with cheering. A second impromptu was given, and several gentlemen were called upon, who declined the honor, and among the rest, Mr F., because he was a Frenchman, not a Spaniard.

During the last courses of the dessert and wine, of coffee and liqueurs, some of the gentlemen were covered with their hats, and some smoked their cigars close to the ladies. In the unceremonious approach to the table, where there were two ecclesiastics as guests; in the seeming neglect of the ladies, who in English, French and American society, are treated with singular attention; in the leaving of the table without order, and returning to it when and where they pleased; and in other respects, the Spanish mode of conducting a superb dinner, differs from what I have been accustomed to see. But in some measure, the maxim applied to dishes, may be applied to manners; "*de gustibus non est disputandum.*"

But it would be great injustice to this select Spanish compa-

ny, not to acknowledge, that throughout this occasion, there was great courtesy to the strangers, and an effort to contribute to their entertainment, sometimes by conversation in pretty good English, and sometimes through an interpreter. The most interesting persons were the family of J., Seniors M. and the brother of her husband. Of their intellectual character, it required on my part, a better acquaintance with the Spanish language to venture an opinion. The Spanish manners partake of the vivacity of the French to a greater degree than I had supposed. From this gay scene I retired with prejudices considerably softened in regard to Spanish character and Spanish manners.

LETTER XI.

TO E—— W——, Esq.

MATANZAS, MARCH 9th, 1828.

* * * IT is a matter of serious inquiry with me, how slaves are treated by the different nations, who compose the population of this island, and in the different species of culture sugar and coffee. There is a marked difference in the methods in Carolina* and Cuba, of employing their slaves; in Carolina, all work on land is done in tasks, and the task is the same on all plantations, and for all hands, male and female;—one hundred and five feet square, which is duly staked out for every negro, is his task for the day, which performed, his master has no claim upon him for further service for that day. The vigorous and active perform the task by three or four o'clock, sometimes by one or two; the strong are seen to help out the weak, the husband the wife, the parent the child, and good feeling is promoted among the gang. In Cuba, they have no measured task on coffee or sugar estates. With the exception of part of Saturday, and a part of Sunday, the whole

* South Carolina.

time of the slave is his master's. They rise at daybreak, and commence their toil; and with short intervals to take their food, they labor till the light is gone, and renew it on some plantations, by the light of the moon or stars, or a blazing fire. As they move to the field in Indian file, the driver brings up the rear with a word and a harmless snap of his whip, to quicken their pace; and in the field they work near together, and occasionally the driver rouses the gang to a quicker movement by an inspiring call, like a carter speaking to his oxen. But I believe the lash is seldom applied; I have never seen it. Nor have I seen occasion for it. The step of the slaves is quick as they walk, their persons erect, the back commonly hollowing in, and the arms hanging a little back; and a cheerful, vigorous movement, and often a lofty and graceful air, strike the stranger's eye.

It astonishes one to see with what rapidity they pass over a field of weeds and bushes with their machet, an instrument like a butcher's cleaver, leaving neither root nor branch behind. This, as I should esteem it, *uncouth* instrument, is wielded with a rapidity and effect, which imply sleight of hand, and strength of wrist, even in females of fourteen or sixteen. Some planters give them the common hoe of our country, in weeding ground not stony; and esteem it a more efficient instrument, and it is certainly a more humane one, as the machet requires the laborer to bend his body low, to work with effect, which must be fatiguing and exhausting under a tropical sun.

It is certain that they work more hours than the farmers in the north of our own country, and I verily believe in each hour accomplish as much and more. There is no conversation among them, no lounging or leaning on the hoe, no slouch in their gait, and every stroke seems to tell. I should not think the opinion extravagant, that the slaves in Cuba accomplish one third more labor than the tasked slaves of Carolina.

So far as I have been able to observe, they have wholesome, and even delicious food, and as much as they desire. It is not

generally measured to them, as in Carolina, nor left to their own cooking. They come to the cook-room with their gourd and take as much as they choose of the delicious plantain; they have rations of fish, indeed, of jerk beef, and of hearts and skirts, to make a variety. A pretty good sized codfish is cut into three parts, and one of them given to a laborer for the day. A pound of jerk beef also, is a ration. In addition to the common fare, they have their own favorite dishes, cooked in their private kettles, in which they put melanga, ochra, and anything they please, raised in their own gardens. They cook their own suppers; and on Saturday evening, they make entertainments, and invite guests with as much form and ceremony as their hospitable masters.

The simplicity and wholesomeness of their food, and constancy of their exercise, commonly secure to them the blessing of health. * * *

It is generally agreed that the labor on sugar estates is most exhausting to the negroes, and it is confidently said, that on many estates there is a loss of from 10 to 15 per cent of their laborers each year. This, however, does not take place on well conducted estates. The severity of the toil on sugar plantations seems acknowledged by the circumstance, that some estates purchase males only, and where both sexes are employed there is often little or no increase of population. As difficulties are thrown more and more in the way of importation of slaves from Africa, a greater attention is paid to pregnant females, to preserve the stock of the plantation. I trust there is with many, I know there is with some, a commiseration of female slaves in that delicate situation. They are exempt from labor for a month before and after the birth, to nurse themselves and the child, and have hours of the day for months after for the same purpose, during which others are at work.

It is said, that on many Spanish sugar estates in the grinding season, they have but two watches, from twelve at noon to twelve at night, and from twelve at night to twelve at noon.

On Mr W.'s, three watches, which plan gives the negroes four whole nights' rest in the week, and three half nights. Mr C. remarks that in French sugar estates on other islands, they work in turn four hours at a time, which makes the fatigue comparatively light. He remarks further, that mills going by steam must prevent much of the expense of grinding; and that there is no danger, but there will be fuel to raise the steam and boil the sugar, in the cane itself. In St Croix there is not a tree for fuel on the island, and their mills go by steam.

* * *

LETTER XII.

TO MRS E—— A——.

CAMIRAoca, MARCH 4th, 1828.

* * * ON the 3d of March, Mr and Mrs S., Mr C., Mr T. and myself, with two servants on horseback set out from Mr T.'s at sunrise for Camiraoca. We passed many fine coffee estates, and an extensive savanna, and arrived at Mr W.'s to breakfast. We were received with great hospitality, and sat down to a superb breakfast, in both Spanish and American style.

This place is a sugar estate of 170 negroes, 140 workers, and 30 Creole children. Connected with this estate, is a coffee estate of 180,000 trees and 60 negroes. The whole location is of a peculiar character. Mr W.'s house is one of the most ancient on the island. The massy doors imply caution, and have a garrison air. The posts of the original building he estimated at 100 years old; the roof has, doubtless, been often renewed, being of the perishable palmleaf. He has commenced building of more durable materials, and a wing is already completed. It is of large blocks of stone; a flat roof and parapet, a tower and belfry, a hall below, and a small chamber at the end above, the whole furnished with loopholes,

from which assailants may be annoyed in any direction. When his plan is completed, there will be a corresponding wing, and a main building uniting both. From the specimen finished, I judge the whole will evince skill in fortification, acquired probably in the late war with England, in which he was successfully engaged. Mr W.'s house overlooks the river of Camiraoca, to which there is a beautiful descent by steps, through a flower and fruit garden, a bathing house, and small faunche mill. On the opposite bank and rising the hill, is a fruitful garden, presenting to the house a charming view. The plantation buildings have as favorable a location as the house. The sugar buildings occupy a swell, descending towards the river. Near the summit is the drying house, placed at a respectful distance from the boilers, for security against fire; next is the mill, going swiftly by mules at a small elevation above the nuts, the cane being carried in, and the expressed cane out, by arched ways. The ox-mill is on a small descent below, and the streams of juice from each unite in a common duct, and fall into a large tank in the boiling house; from this the kettles are fed, and the sugar from the last of the row, is placed in shoal vats to cake, and is thence transferred to hogsheads in the first building in the row, while the skimmings of the kettles and the molasses flow onward in a duct to the distillery.

The stable, mechanics' rooms, &c, occupy another parallel swell; and a bohea of stone huts, calculated for comfort and security, is nearly completed, on a convenient spot near the whole.

The importance of a bohea on this plan, was suggested by the ferocious and desperate conduct of a Fantee negro on the estate, two years since. The fellow was enraged on account of correction bestowed on his wife by a negro driver of his own nation, and he plotted revenge. He secured the door of his enemy, as he esteemed him, by a rope, and set fire to the bohea in two places. The first negro that burst from the building he stabbed, mistaking him for his enemy; perceiving his

error, he struck at the driver, as he next rushed out, who attempted to parry the vigorous blow with his whip, but it severed his jugular. The desperado next cut his own throat, and to be certain of death, plunged his knife into his own breast.

In accounting for a tragedy so bloody and unparalleled, we must resort to a principle, which in many of the negroes is very powerful,—the expectation of returning by death, to their native country. This principle is so strong in the Carrobalees, that suicide is frequent among them. On one estate eight of these misguided men were found hanging in company, in one night. Mr W. conjecturing that this notion had its influence on the mind of the murderer and *felo de se*, collected the negroes of the plantation, and with the smoking ruins of the *bohea*, half of which had been destroyed, he reduced his corse to ashes, and dispersed it to the winds, in terror to the survivors, and in discouragement to future suicide.

The river and brook, which intersect these associate estates, are beauties and conveniences rare in this island, and render them susceptible of high improvement. The valleys and swells and dark soil are adapted to the cane, and the red soil and champaign, to the coffee. The distance to the *embarcadera* on the bay at the mouth of the river, is four miles and a half, and thence to Matanzas, sixteen miles, the village and church only a mile and a half distant, render the estate valuable, and the future mansion an enchanting situation.

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LETTER XIII.

TO MISS A—— W—— A——.

CAMIRAoca, MARCH 4th, 1828.

* * * SOME of the trees on this place deserving to be mentioned, are the Guinea palm, of which one hundred are growing, and several of them begin to yield wine and oil. The

top considerably resembles that of the royal palm, the curvature of the long waving leaf I think still more graceful. The stem was not of sufficient height to judge what will be its beauty. The fruit of the tree makes its appearance at the top on a cone resembling a high-bush black-berry, only the cone is the size of a gallon keg, and the purple protuberances of this magnificent berry as big as a two ounce ball. They are yellow when ripe ; and are broken in a mortar and boiled in water, and the skimming is palm oil, which constitutes an important article in African commerce, and African food. For the latter purpose it is raised on this place. Negroes prefer it to butter.

The wine of the palm is drawn from the tree by cutting a shoot near the top ; and the pleasant liquor flows from the incision to the amount of a quart.

The citron is another interesting plant, a shrub rather than a tree. It grows as awkwardly as the fig tree ; but its fruit is beautiful to the eye. It is almost an acorn in form ; or like a lemon of enormous size, nine inches long, and five or six in diameter, large at the stem, and tapering to the blossom end.

The cactus, which is called the prickly pear, and is of dwarfish size in our northern pots, here towers six or seven feet ; and stands firm on a flattened trunk a foot in diameter. The aloes, from which is extracted the potent and bitter medicine in ordinary use, is growing in this garden. A leaf broken, has a glassy appearance, full of thick, oily juice, which is expressed and boiled to an essence.

The mamie of St Domingo, whose leaf is like *magnolia grandiflora*, is a fine fruit of the size of a melon.

The anetto is here a small tree. It bears clusters of small pods, filled with small seeds, of a pink color, which, drawn across the finger, leaves a streak of red ; and it yields a delicate red paint.

From Mr W. I understood that coffee bags are made of the bark of aloes leaves.

Clouds were in the morning indicative of rain ; but after de-

liberation, it was thought safe in this dry time, to ride to the landing place of Mr W. on the bay of Camiraoca. It was about four miles and a half. We passed through a small village of the same name, containing, perhaps forty thatched houses, two or three with tiled roofs, four shops, and a church. The church is pleasantly located on the top of a hill, built with little expense and already going to decay.

The road to the landing is rocky ; a tavern and shop are found at the head of the small, shoal bay, and on one side of it, Mr W. has a store to shelter his molasses, sugar, and rum. His little cove is tolerably protected from the north winds, to which the bays are directly open, by a natural mole of rock, which just admits his launch. In a drill of the rock, he has fixed a sturdy post, and the crane from the top of it swings over the launch. Into this bay empties the Camiraoca river, a very small stream at this time, but a considerable volume of water at the rainy season. The north wind often closes its mouth with sand, and the stream again works it clear. The north wind with rain beat into the bay, while we were there, and dashed the waves against and over the rocks.

We saw several large fish about the store, called the grouper, weighing thirty or forty pounds, short, and very lusty, and much esteemed. The distance of this embarcadera from Matanzas, by water, is sixteen miles.

Along this coast, the pirates have practised their barbarous business. * * * It is a well known fact that persons on shore have had connexion and partnership with the villains in their boats ; and have had a voice in dictating the disposal of the property and *lives* in the captured vessels. A proprietor of a handsome launch was a planter, and when consulted whether a certain captive should be spared, he replied, "No ; dead men do not talk." It is affirmed on respectable authority, that one of these land associates with the pirates when arrested, offered \$150,000 for his liberty. The boon, however, was denied him, and he is still in close confinement, and probably will be till the fund is exhausted.

The family and their visitants dined at Mr S.'s, who owns a coffee estate in their neighborhood. The dinner was luxurious, and among other delicacies, was a sauce, which might be easily mistaken for apple-sauce, formed of the young fruit of the mango-tree. Also, another delicious sauce, white, and of a pine-apple taste, made, I think, of the green fruit of the mamie of St Domingo, and which, I am informed, is as safe and wholesome, as delicious.

On this estate I first saw the cocoa-nut tree, in bearing. It is of the palm family; and displays its fruit beautifully in large clusters at the top. The fruit is of all degrees of size, from the beautiful flowers on a spike, like a wheat sheaf, to the ripe nut.

In the lemon tree, I am disappointed; it is little more than a large bush like a quince tree, and refusing the knife. It hangs with flowers, small lemons, and the ripe fruit, all together. I returned to Mr W.'s at an early hour, on account of the coldness of the day, and the chilliness of the wind, which blew through their spacious hall, kindly attended by Mr T., against my remonstrances. I went early to bed, and lay warm beneath blankets, expecting to awake with cough and rheumatism. In the morning, however, the mercury being at 61°, and the dogs shivering in the hall, I rose in my usual health, and before breakfast, ranged on horseback with Mr C. and Mr W. through both plantations, to see one of the greatest curiosities of the island,—a *chepote* spring,—a spring of mineral tar. It is on the banks of the Camiraoca. We first discovered the substance floating on the water like oil, and glistening in the sun. We found it next on the banks, like tar, which had escaped from a barrel, and become fixed in little hollows, somewhat hardened by the sun, yet yielding to the pressure of a stick. We examined a hollow in the bank, filled with water, about two yards over, and a foot deep. Here the substance was four or five inches deep in thickness, and possibly many more at the bottom of the puddle, which we ascertained by a stake

crowded into it ; and raising it out of the water, a pound or two clung to it, and a yard or two roped from the end of it, till it was wound into a knot by turning the stick round.

We collected with ease, two or three quarts of this singular substance, in the back part of a palm leaf, to be sent to Matanzas for our curious friends. I know not all the localities of the chepote. There is a key of it near the coast, which at high water is covered, and at low water is two feet above the surface. Launches lie along side, and are filled with it. A gentleman who has made experiments with this mineral tar, thinks he can make a composition with it, for covering roofs, superior to any which has been invented. The chepote, which forms the key, I understand, is hard, like rosin, and breaks like it.

LETTER XIV.

TO THE SAME.

LA CAROLINA, MARCH 5th, 1828.

WE took leave of our hospitable friends, and returned to Sumidero. On our way about two miles, we discovered at a distance, the tree, which, by way of eminence, is called "the beautiful." Its form, seen at a little distance, is globular ; the ramification so regular and full, and the foliage so thick, that it seems solid. It appeared as if dressed for exhibition, and as we drew near, a scarlet breasted, or scarlet crested bird, I could not decide which, as it soon flew away, was perched on its bosom, as a diamond pin in a lady's kerchief.

Mr C. and myself dismounted, to examine this far-famed tree. The diameter of the stem is three feet ; the diameter of the globular top is sixty ; and this, also, is its height. The limbs radiate with wonderful regularity, and though almost innumerable, scarcely any two of them are seen to chafe or cross each other.

We passed through an extensive savanna, near the beautiful hills of Camiraoca ; and by a potrero of rich land, which the proprietor is beginning to convert into a sugar estate, we passed into the richest soil I have seen on the island, belonging to Mr ———. The cane was twelve or fifteen feet high ; the soil black and loose ; the oxen without slits in their nostrils ; the negroes decently dressed ; and everything wore the aspect of ease and comfort.

We ascended the mountain, which separates Sumidero from ——— ; on its cleared height, we enjoyed a charming prospect. An extensive valley of the richest soil, extended itself west, and north, and east, with six sugar estates in view. The passes of Camiraoca interposed between us and the ocean at one point ; but its waters and breakers were in view on the right and left of them. A vessel was seen entering the bay of Matanzas ; and the whole view of valley, mountain, and ocean, was truly enchanting.

We descended the mountain, and found ourselves in Mr J.'s sugar estate in Sumidero, and soon arrived at my friend's, at La Carolina.

For almost a year, there has been little rain on this island. The brooks have dried up ; the rivers have scarcely maintained water in the deepest parts of their channels ; the tanks of many plantations have been exhausted, and wells of 300 feet deep have been sunk deeper to obtain water. The soil has chapped open with thirst, and crumbled under the feet of the traveller. Orange trees have been shrivelled in their foliage, and stunted in the size of their fruit. Coffee trees have worn the melancholy hue of yellow leaves, and the planters have been ready to despair of their crop for the coming season. In this extremity, heaven has visited this part of the island with abundant rains. The Sumidero, which was suffering in, perhaps, the greatest degree, has shared most abundantly in this blessing. The tanks are filled ; the trees and walls are washed from their snuff colored hue ; the droves of mules, with their

heavy burdens pass without raising a suffocating dust ; and the coffee trees will now soon be white with bloom and promise. While all nature smiles with joy, let man look up to his Maker, with the humble tribute of a grateful heart.

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LETTER XV.

TO MR E—— W——.

LEMONAL, MARCH 8th, 1828.

* * * IN company with Mr C., we started to breakfast with Mr M——n. The recent showers had not only laid the dust, but had occasioned mud, and collections of water in the highway, affording us a specimen of the travelling in the rainy season.

We met a mayoral with twelve negroes on horseback, two on a horse ; three horses before him, and three behind. They were all young, from ten to sixteen years, uncommonly fair and plump, a little sad, but of good tempered countenances. Male and female were astride. To New-Englanders, it was a sight occasioning considerable emotion. Whether imported or creole, we could not tell.

We were in season at Lemonal, and again breakfasted without our host, he being gone to see a sick neighbor.

After breakfast, in looking round the place, we perceived seventy or eighty bushels of euchre, just dug from about a quarter of an acre, grown from slips in seven months ; and as it yields a crop and a half in a year, four hundred and twenty bushels, with little cultivation, and is esteemed nearly twice as nutritious as the sweet potato, it is a fine crop. It yields the best of starch, and is a pleasant addition to the variety of negro diet, as well as to the planter's table. It is a species of cassavi, or cassada.

Around this gentleman's residence, is an ornamental hedge

of wild ipecacuanha. It grows about a yard high, in stems and limbs as big as one's finger, with few leaves, but tipped with a small red flower, which gives it a beautiful appearance, contrasted with the green stems.

In the piazza of the house, on the basement story, were forty negroes, sorting coffee into three parcels—good, inferior, and bad. They were fine looking negroes, lusty and muscular, and of contented countenances. Most of them were singing in a low tone; one leading, and several responding in chorus, as in the water-song of Carolina.

At eleven o'clock, with Mr M., and a Capt. B., in bad health, from the Mississippi, Mr C. and I repaired to a cave in the neighborhood. The mountain is very bold, almost perpendicular, yet covered with a luxuriant growth, trees of considerable size growing where nothing was to be seen into which they could thrust their roots, but cliffs of lime-rock. The entrance into the cave is a lofty, natural portico of rock, sustained by lime-rock pillars. We penetrated with flaming torches into several of its recesses. They presented to the eye a dome-like appearance, rising forty or fifty feet to the highest point, adorned with pendant stalactytes, and here and there a pillar, as if left to prop the roof. A living spring of pure water is found in this cave; and innumerable bats, disturbed in their slumbers by the glare of our torches, flitted about it. There were no brilliant petrifications to be seen in this cave, nor in the one we visited on the Santa Ana estate, such as excite admiration in Weyer's cave, in Virginia. This may be imputed to the breadth of the entrance, and the little depth of the cave, to which we penetrated, and the free accession of air, and the general dryness of the cave.

As the cleaning of coffee is the business of this day, I took a hasty notice of the process. The berries, of a red color, are picked from the tree, and spread in their *cherry* state, in the siccaderos, or dryers. Formerly, a more expeditious means of preparing the coffee for market was used, denominated the

grating mill, by which the green skin of the coffee was rent, and the pulp between the skin and parchment covering of the berry was dried in seven days instead of twentyone. But it is not much used on this island. Dried whole, the coffee yields about three per cent. more in weight, and is more easily preserved in a fine state free from must, and is laid by to be cleaned in the season when the laborers can be best spared for the purpose. The dryers are formed with great care and neatness, and cover from a quarter to half an acre. They elevate the ground with a bed of limestone, beaten to pieces, and raised in the middle of the bed so as to have a gentle declivity, and surround the edges with a wall of a foot in height. This bed and wall are covered with a strong cement or mortar, beaten down with a heavy beetle, to render it capable of sustaining all changes of weather. An incidental, but important use of the siccaderos, is, to fill an extensive tank with water, to serve the plantation through the dry season, as brooks, I may say, they have none, and wells are rare, and sunk through stone for hundreds of feet, in this part of the island.

On the dryers, the berries are kept stirring, lest they should heat. They are spread thin or thick, according to the extent of their works, which, as they have time, they extend from year to year.

When the coffee, in the cherry, is dry, they rake it together in a conical heap, which they cover from the dews and rains with sail-cloth and moveable roofs of palm-leaves.

From the dryers, the coffee in cherry is removed to the peeling mill. This is an octagonal roof (I speak of the one now before me; they are variously built) resting on eight posts, and terminating in a cupola. This roof, which runs high, is often the pleasant resort and building place, of large flocks of doves.

The mill is constructed like a tanner's bark-mill. The wheel is of large circumference, and of heavy wood, sometimes bolted together with iron, and sometimes only cleated,

but weighing a ton. This moves in a narrow walled way, a foot and a half deep, half filled with coffee berries, the quantity generally preventing the crushing of the seed. The wheel moves round with rapidity, drawn by mules, on a fast trot, with a negro sitting on the axle of the wheel to which they are harnessed, to lash them into speed, himself moving in a whirl which might addle some men's brains. A rake of two stout teeth, hung to the axle, follows in the track of the wheel, constantly shifting, and lightening the bed.

When, by this process, the skin of the cherry is bruised off, it is sifted through a *heading* sieve, constructed of wire, one-third of an inch apart, and called No. 3. This operation is performed in the centre circle of the mill, and the *unbruised* cherries are again submitted to the wheel. That portion which goes through the sieve, is transferred to the fanning mill, in a convenient building near by.

The fanning mill is constructed on the principle of a machine for winnowing grain. The hull, or cherry skin, is thrown out by the revolving fan, the clear coffee, good and bad, falls through a wire sieve. Any cherries which had escaped the mill, and other rubbish, fall through a conductor at the side, and are returned to the mill. The coffee is next transferred to the *divider*, a machine recently invented by Mr P. Chartrand, and made in Carolina, not as yet extensively introduced.

The *divider* is formed on a principle analogous to the rice mill sand screen. It has a hopper like the fan mill, through which the coffee falls on an inclined plane of wire, just large enough to suffer the blighted and broken kernels to fall through; the large and fair pass to a coarser sieve, and fall into a heap or bag at pleasure, and anything still coarser, which escapes over this sieve, falls on the floor, to be thrown away, or returned to the mill.

The business of hand-picking is thus almost completed by machinery. But, lest anything should escape, which should discredit the coffee, it passes the table of sharp-eyed and expe-

rienced pickers, who determine its three qualities with accuracy. By means of the divider, Mr M. doubles the quantity of hand-picked coffee in a day ; his negroes picking six bags without the divider, and twelve with it.

There is a great extent of wall building on this estate ; ultimately, it will be enclosed, and in part traversed, by this beautiful and permanent fence. Four negroes were building ; and with the materials carted to the spot, and laid in a double train, two negroes will lay thirty feet in a day. It is two feet and a half at the base, and drawn in to one and a half at the top, and is four feet and a half high. It is made of broken limestone, in pieces of moderate size, with a face on both sides of the wall, and filled up with smaller fragments. It is firm, having no frost, and few accidents to disturb it ; and when new, has a chalky whiteness, but loses lustre by age and weather. The material, on most estates, costs little, being broken into suitable size for walls, by the sledges of negroes clearing the land.

Mr M. is attempting something like farming on his estate ; is walling in, a night and day pasture ; intends to keep fifty cows, and furnish butter for the market. He secures water, by digging lagunas, to be filled in the rainy season, and has already extensive pasturage of guinea grass. He raises hogs for sale ; and tobacco, which is manufactured into cigars on the place. He sells a considerable quantity of corn. By his farming, he is determined to bear the expenses of the plantation, and that the crop of coffee shall be net gain.

His negroes are strictly governed, and by his own account, with some rigor. Peccadilloes are punished by the drivers, with three strokes of the lash ; greater offences by the mayoral, with twentyfive ; and these officers are limited to those numbers respectively. The master, for great offences, theft, drunkenness, &c, takes the liberty of ordering, sometimes, two hundred lashes ; but nurses the wounded back with great care. From my window I observed the negroes assembled in order a little after daybreak, to see correction by the mayoral. I

heard the snap of the lash, but no other noise ; and the negroes retired from the parade in Indian file. I heard ten lashes more when I was a half mile on my way.

LETTER XVI.

TO MRS E—— A ——.

MARCH 8th, 1828.

THROUGH a sugar and coffee estate we had a pleasant morning ride to Mr M.'s to breakfast. This gentleman is from Carolina, has an extensive estate ; and lives in a mansion which cost \$40,000, placed on a conical hill, from which he looks down on a coffee and sugar estate in a fruitful valley, where the red soil is several yards deep. The cane was about as large as on the black soil, and from twelve to fifteen feet high, the first season of grinding. The proprietor expects by using the tops of the cane, as manure for the coffee-trees, to obtain as much coffee from 150,000 trees, as was formerly obtained without manure from 300,000 trees.

He has a hundred and eighty negroes. In five years, he lost but four negroes, and two of them by drowning. In the last year he lost sixteen, chiefly by a prevailing dysentery. He has a mason, who is invaluable to him ; and who in his absence sleeps in the piazza for his mistress's security. He lives by himself, and his wife is nurse in the hospital. Mr M. formerly kept the creoles in the hospital, for the sake of their being more carefully and skilfully nursed. But perceiving that the negroes were anxious to have their children in their huts, to give them portions of their own allowance, and to enjoy their company, he has gratified them. The hospital is a stone building with a yard walled in, airy and commodious.

On this estate the cane is ground by steam, and the nuts revolve in a horizontal position, and all danger from feeding the nuts is prevented. This method is economical and humane ;

economical, because 200 lbs. of coal will carry the machine for a day ; it is humane, as night grinding is unnecessary, for the mill in a part of the day, yields more cane juice than supplies the kettles ; and the negroes get their full rest on this estate. They are engaged in boiling six hours, off and on, day and night. They have rations of fish and meat, every day ; have a doctor when sick, and as much land allowed them to cultivate for themselves, as they can keep clean ; and accompaniments to their fish and cane, as much as they desire.

As we entered the spacious yard of this house, we were inspired with some degree of awe of the powerful little animal, the bibiagua, of which we had seen much before. A regular siege had been carried on against a bibiagua for six months ; this subterranean fortress had been penetrated through soil and rocks, twenty feet in a perpendicular descent ; and its foundations had not been broken up. There was no suspicion of their invasion in this favorite spot, set with valuable trees, shrubs and flowers, till in one night they stripped the choicest of the flowers and plants of every leaf.

This valuable house has been struck by lightning, and was instantly in flames ; but a flood of rain falling, it was soon extinguished. Thirty or forty square yards were ripped from the roof, and not a vestige of the material was to be found. The plaistering over head of three chambers was stripped off, and different parts of the house, some of them eighty feet apart injured, and the bolt descending by a post, passed into a tank and disappeared through a perforation a foot and a half from the bottom. The tank had little water in it. No individual was essentially injured. The house is now protected by rods.

This place is well furnished with water. There is a well 180 feet deep, and from ten to thirty feet of water in it. For the accommodation of the family, they have a tank sixty feet long, twelve wide and eleven deep. We observed also a laguna, surrounded by the ornamental bamboo ; but in this uncommonly dry year, it appeared to have no water. A branch of

the Canima river passes through a part of this estate, and disappearing in a Sumidero, one of those large pits with which this region is distinguished, it again bursts forth to view after a subterranean course of a quarter of a mile.

Mr M. the sensible proprietor of this estate, thinks that slaves are in a more favorable situation in this country than in our own, that they work no more,* have a more varied and comfortable fare, and can if they please, easily work out their freedom. They have certain privileges, as much land as they choose to till well, and the whole produce to sell in corn or pork, or what they please. I have myself seen a negro's hog worth \$50. The government favors manumission. If a negro can pay to his master the price he paid for him, he must let him go. If they do not agree, the Captain of the partido directs a commission to settle his price, and the master must take it. If he pays a part of the price, his master must release his service in proportion to the sum paid. If at the master's death the whole is not paid, he may then pay the rest and be free. The number of free negroes on this island is very great, which is an evidence of the liberality of government in this regard, and, I trust, of the humanity of masters.

With respect to the talents of negroes, it is observed that they have no great judgment in planning, but can execute and imitate as well as the Chinese. The walls they build are mathematically exact, and as neat as those laid by a white man, and as rapidly built.

A new species of domestic animal is found in the space walled in, round this house—the genuine terrapin. I believe the animals were imported. They feed on guinea grass as contentedly as oxen, and wandering about the garden eat the fallen flowers. They burrow into the earth to get out of the sun, and drop their eggs carelessly and without hatching, probably be-

*Of this I doubt.

cause they have not sand to receive them and to perform the office of incubation. They are very delicious eating.

The habitation of a runaway negro had been recently discovered, and some of his furniture was brought in to his master. Imprimis, a pouch manufactured in the Guinea style, with a lappet and a separate cap to shut over it for the more perfect security of the treasure within. This consisted of his name, written by his master as a passport, a fetiche, two keys, probably to open his master's store-houses, money carefully done up in a rag, a wax candle of his own manufacture, and sundry other things. Whether he was of a hospitable turn, or wished to accommodate a friend, or designed to have a family, or to keep tavern, is not known ; but he had three bedsteads set up in his hut. He had also prudently laid in provisions. One of his master's pigs had been very nicely butchered, and preserved perfectly delicate with lime-juice. These facts indicate some talent, and forethought, and industry to provide for his comfort.

It is a pretty common thing on estates for negroes to make their escape into the woods, and lead a wild life. There are some, who have been years in the enjoyment of stolen liberty ; and probably there are hundreds, perhaps thousands in this condition. Sometimes they do not even go off from the estates of their master, and come to his tank for water, and to his fields and pens for provisions. One of these wild men from Mr S.'s estate, had committed some serious offence, and was trammelled with irons. He watched his opportunity and escaped into the woods, and though soon pursued, he had rid himself of his clanking chains, by which he might be traced. With lime-juice and his machet he had sawed off his irons ; and one piece, too large to yield suddenly to this method, he had battered off between two stones. Some gentlemen, some time after, who were in pursuit of other negroes, came by surprise on this man. He was hunting a hautour, a kind of tree wood-chuck, and so intense in his watch of the animal on the tree,

that he easily fell into the hands of the hunters, who restored him to his master. * * * *

This family, with whom we passed a few hours breakfasting and dining, is very interesting. They have children at home under a domestic teacher, and children abroad for their education. The establishment in doors and out, I should like to see more leisurely, and I hope to comply with their invitation to spend a few days with them, on my return from Havana.

At three o'clock we left Mr M.'s in company with our friends Mr and Mrs S. The copious showers, which had almost deluged the Sumidero, had not reached in this direction six miles, and our ride was very dusty. We passed two coffee estates near Mr M.'s, beautifully adorned with avenues and lime hedges of vivid green. Nothing is more common than to see bahouca, (bejuco,) or vines of many species, running with luxuriance over the trees, great and small, of the forest. Many of them commence their growth, and fasten their roots in the top of a tree, and thence run downwards and fasten themselves again in the ground. They are sometimes seen hanging above, and waving in the air below, without any fixture to the ground. I have seen a vine as big as my finger, fastened above, and, two yards before it came to the ground, sending out a dozen filaments, evidently intended to fix in the ground as roots, though they had not yet been able to reach it. These vines are every where seen in the woods, and often form symmetrical arbors, circular or oval, that would be beautiful in the most tasteful gardens. But of all sights, the most amusing, and that continually to be seen, is the *Scotchman hugging the creole*, as it is very significantly called. This often takes place on the loftiest trees of the forest,—especially the ceyba. The bahouca, (bejuco,) descends from the top, and rises from the ground, and winds round the trunk of the tree, and by its many convolutions literally webs over the trunk, grows into itself, branch with branch, and looks like an immense serpent wreathing about its victim. The effect is ever the same. The creole, the original tree, is

smothered in the hostile embrace. It commences a premature decay, rots, falls by piecemeal, becomes a mere skeleton, and finally disappears, leaving the parasitical bahouca, changed in its very nature from vine to tree, in prosperous possession of the ground. The trunk of the murderous tree near the ground is irregular, openworked, but vigorous and healthy, with a top running high, and sometimes with branches from two feet to three and a half in diameter. At the ground, I have measured a space of from six to seven feet between the thrifty parts of the upstart tree. These parts become united twenty or thirty feet from the ground, in a solid trunk, and send out branches two feet in diameter. The leaf of the new tree is not always the same, but the limb when cut, always sends out a milky sap.

LETTER XVII.

TO MISS M—— S—— A——.

MATANZAS, MARCH 9th, 1823.

* * * WE arrived at Matanzas at the dusk of evening without any material incident, and I was pleasantly domesticated with my friend B. in his spacious bachelor's hall, agreeably to an invitation given in the country.

On the sabbath, the bell at an early hour invited us to mass; and again at eight and twelve. At ten I repaired to the church, expecting a service, but was disappointed. A half dozen ladies were retiring, and conversing with glee; but duly touched the holy water in the fount near the door and crossed themselves. A grave lady of seventy, with a countenance of sincere devotion, passed me at the door, with a highly ornamented cross on her finger. The church being open and empty, I ventured in to survey the structure and ornaments. I should judge it to be eighty feet long, and cruciform; the principal altar, forming the head piece, and two other altars in

spacious recesses, forming the cross ; an open space extending down to the eastern entrance completing the floor. A cupola or tower, with two bells at one corner of the eastern end, has been recently added to what appears to be an ancient structure ; and, when convenient, a corresponding tower at the other end is to be added. The external appearance of the building is not imposing by its grandeur or beauty. The ornaments within are somewhat gorgeous ; but not in very good taste. In the recess of the left as you face the principal altar, in a niche of the wall, stands the figure of the patron saint of the city, St. Carlo ; and in a corresponding niche on the right, is another saint, probably an apostle.

The altar is adorned with a small figure of Christ crucified ; and beside the sacred ark, are cherubim or angels. The paintings about the church have an antique appearance ; the coloring is fine, and so are some of the faces. The most considerable which in a hasty glance I noticed, seemed to be of the holy Virgin, ascending, and with a crown on her head, while a group of devotee women were looking upward with an air of grief or of supplication, I was at a loss to decide which.

The area of the church is open, and without furniture, except a few settees scattered here and there, intended, perhaps, for the infirm and aged, but commonly occupied by the less devout, as I afterwards observed.

At twelve o'clock, by invitation, I went to church with Mr and Mrs S., under the protection of a Spanish lady. There were about two hundred worshippers and spectators present. The ladies have a church dress, from which it is either unfashionable or sinful to vary. At this time, it being Lent, it is a black gown, black shoes, and black veil. They entered with servants bearing rugs, which being spread, they kneeled, and commonly the servants kneeled behind them. The ladies were in a kneeling posture through the service, except that many of them, weary of that attitude, sought relief by sitting,

like persons of another religion, upon their carpets. From this attitude, however, at the sound of a small bell, they resumed the kneeling posture. At the same signal the gentlemen, usually standing, or sitting on the settees, spread a handkerchief on the pavement and kneeled.

The service was short,—perhaps fifteen or twenty minutes, consisting of prayers read rapidly, not heard, except in a low murmuring voice, a word not being distinguishable by a single worshipper. In general, the officiating priest was with his face towards the altar, and of course his back towards the assembly, so that they must have heard with difficulty, even if he had spoken with distinctness. But to be heard was not intended; for if heard it would have been useless, as the prayers were in an unknown tongue. It was simply pantomimic devotion—form, exhibited to the eye—and nothing else. The priest alone, received the wafer and the cup; and if I mistake not, it was at the moment of his receiving the wafer and the cup severally, that the bell was rung, that all in the church might simultaneously kneel.

Accustomed to Protestant worship, which, very naturally, appears to me more intellectual, instructive, and spiritual, this scene was not highly edifying. Yet, I deny not that there was a solemnity in the scene, which may have been impressive to some. The almost twilight darkness of the church; the tapers burning at noon-day; the profound stillness of the assembly, and the prostration of the greater part of it, master and slave, mistress and serving woman, kneeling together in an open space without distinction, as equally needing and supplicating mercy of their common Creator; was an impressive scene. It was an appeal, partly to the senses, and partly to the imagination, and for the passing moment with some effect. But the understanding not having been enlightened, nor the affections interested by a distinct exhibition of truth, and duty, or a detailed confession of sin, I should judge the impression to be vague and generalizing, and not tending to the correction of

the errors of the heart and life ; not likely to be followed by the necessary fruits of repentance, and a really devout and holy life.

It would be disingenuous to condemn in the whole the offices of religion, because performed in a manner widely from one's own experience ; and I doubt not, that in some Catholic hearts the religious principle is so strong that it is fed and comforted by means and ceremonies so jejune. But what is the influence of this system of religion on the mass of population in this city and this country ? In Matanzas, there is a population of ten or twelve thousand, and but a single church. Mass is said at different hours from early morning to meridian ; to three successive assemblies of perhaps one hundred and fifty, or two hundred souls, chiefly females ; and not an audible word of instruction is given. Whatever benefit is to be derived from visiting the church, is shared by a very small portion of the people,—nine thousand, out of ten thousand, probably nineteen individuals out of twenty, have neither part nor lot in the benefit, whatever it may be. The influence of fifteen minutes in the church, if salutary, seems soon dissipated by the business and amusement without its walls. The shops are open ; the cockpit fuller than on busier days of the week, and the streets thronged with volantes ; the theatre and ball-room crowded ; and the city devoted to pleasure. How many of those, who kneel in the church, retire to kneel or read, or reflect in secret, and how many hasten to mingle in the scenes just described, is known to God.

But a New England sabbath is a different scene. The streets are still till the bell announces the hour of worship ; they are then thronged with young and old, and the extensive church is filled with the contributions of two hundred families. In a town of twelve thousand inhabitants, there are as many churches as thousands, and as many ministers to lead their flocks into the green pastures of the word of God, and by the still waters of his holy ordinances. The prayers are intelligible, and the

instruction given in the discourses of the morning and evening, is adapted to the capacities and wants, the frailties and sorrows of the listening auditors. That instruction flows from pure lips; for an immoral minister is not tolerated either by the people or the priesthood; and ordinarily the sacred precept is enforced by the pastoral example.

When the services of the church are over, there are no amusements to dissipate the sigh of contrition breathed in the sanctuary, or to bury in forgetfulness the instruction received, and the good purposes formed of a life more devoted to God and virtue. The parents return to their private dwellings to prolong their devotions, and to compare the instruction they have received with the unerring word of God. The children remain in the Sabbath school, to recite their elementary lessons to select and skilful teachers, that they may be early grounded in the truths and duties of our holy religion. Such is a New England sabbath; grave, yet cheerful; a day of rest to the body, but of delightful activity and elevation to the mind. It is not, indeed, all we could wish it. The teachers have their frailties; for "to err is human;" sometimes devoting to abstruse subjects, the time which is needed for plain preaching; and sometimes kindling the flames of discord, instead of fanning the fire of charity and brotherly love. The people too, are imperfect, some inconstant in attendance, others critical and faultfinding in hearing, rather than receiving with meekness the engrafted word; condemning both preacher and assembly, according to the suspicion of party feeling, or the use or neglect of a short vocabulary. These are evils incidental to religious liberty, and to the privilege and duty of every one to judge, having the sacred test of truth in his hands, what is right. They are evils, however, dishonorable to the cause of our common Master, and giving occasion to its enemies to blaspheme, and are therefore to be suppressed with the utmost care.

LETTER XVIII.

TO MISS E—— A——.

MATANZAS, MARCH 11th, 1828.

I HAVE been gratified to see your hand in numerous letters. Just at this moment, the servant put into my hand a packet of January 28th. The letters arrive, as men go to their graves, without order or regard to age. The day before yesterday, I received the letters of 17th February, referring to others, written the 7th, 8th, 9th of the same month, which I have not yet received. But all is well—The winds are not as regular as the mail. I have much delight in prospect; and how many letters from my very kind, very affectionate, and truly loved family, are on the way to their grateful husband and father, I know not. I only ask that you *will not be weary in well doing*; and that *you will have patience with me, and I will pay you all*. This last arrival is a delightful effusion from you all. As iron sharpeneth iron, so does Dr F. the thoughts of my family. Your last was written on the day of his ever welcome services in my pulpit. * * *

Will it not delight your warm little heart, that I address a sheet to you, which, of course, you will have the undisputed right of reading first to yourself, and then (if there be no secrets in it,) to the family? Of this honor, you will, of course, be a little vain, when you consider from what a distant land your correspondent addresses you; and to maintain your part with dignity in our future correspondence, you will doubtless be diligent to inform your mind, to improve your style, and to render distinct and elegant, your chirography. In each of these particulars, I think improvement is discerned; a pledge to an affectionate father, of elegant scholarship, if your life and health should be spared a few years longer.

I have been a few days in this city, but have not patroled the narrow streets, very much, on account of the heat, and reflec-

tion of the rays of the sun from the whitewashed houses. But much is not lost to my curiosity. Generally, the houses make an indifferent appearance, being of a single story; this, however, on the principal streets, is often 20 feet high. The roofs are commonly tiled, sometimes shingled, and some of the more ancient, thatched, as in the country, with palm leaves. I will describe to you a friend's house, which is a favorable specimen of the better sort. You enter, from the street, a square room, a part of which often accomodates a large, clumsy, one horse carriage, called a volante, and the rest serves as an entry to the dwelling part of the house. The drawing room or parlor is also on the street, with two monstrous windows, wide enough to admit the volante, and fifteen feet from top to bottom. Instead of glass, there is an iron or wooden grating to the window and the ladies behind it look like nuns who have taken the veil. As these immense windows reach down nearly to the floor, the family is virtually in the street, and whether dining or supping, working or playing, conversing wisely or foolishly, in good company, or otherwise, all is open to the curious. Sometimes, however, a screen is interposed. The door which opens into this room, is opposite one of these windows, and a good sized load of hay might drive through it. These vast apertures, though somewhat odd to strangers, are convenient to the tenants, who thus obtain a cheering current of air in this torrid climate. On this 11th of March, I am almost melted; what will the poor souls do, when the sun is vertical? Through the door, just described, you pass into a court, open to the sky, at the right and left of which, are sleeping chambers, and in front the kitchen. Their floors are of plaister, and what with shuffling of the feet, moving of tables and chairs, and leaning back in them, according to the uncivil fashion of loungers in New England, it is unavoidable, that lime dust should be ground out, and be flapped by the breeze, entering so freely, on tables and chairs. Yet if not so neat as our painted wooden floors, well washed once or twice a week, they are charmingly cool.

It is Thursday; and a little after day break, I rose, adjusted my toilet, and went to matins or mass;—I know not how, accurately, to phrase it. There were about 20 persons in the church, and generally on their knees in the open area; some kneeling on rugs, and some on white handkerchiefs. There were about a half a dozen ladies in black gowns and veils. The men were, in general, old and grey headed. Negroes came in, and had equal privileges with whites, advanced as near to the altar as others, and with a coarse black shawl, kneeled by the side of lace veils. This pleased me; for all are equal beggars when they appear before God; and costume is little, the heart everything. Some, as they entered, touched the consecrated water with a finger, and crossed themselves as they advanced, and kneeled; others crossed themselves only. The priest entered from a vestry room, through a door screened by a red curtain. On his head was a black cap, and over his shoulders depended a mantle, striped with gold lace. His under dress was rather feminine; a gown of white muslin, flounced at the bottom, and reaching to his shoes. He uncovered his head and began the service in a solemn, but inaudible voice. A little boy attended him, to hand the utensils in the service, and, I thought, to respond, in some of the brief prayers. On elevating the *host*, now, a wafer, now, a cup containing consecrated wine, the little boy, three times, and loudly, rang a little bell; the people crossed themselves, and some smote their breasts with a heavy stroke. The *priest* alone, tasted the cup. He occasionally bowed the knee before the cross, and several times kissed the altar. Two or three times, he turned his face to the people, and parted his hands, as if conferring his benediction. On closing the brief service, the little boy handed him his cap, and he retired through the curtained door. He re-appeared a few minutes afterwards, in a black gown, passed by the front altar, bowed the knee as he passed another altar, at the right hand, and took his seat in a kind of a mahogany sentry-box, with a canopy over it, several

of which are in the floor of the church. Here he glanced an eye round on the persons kneeling, and, in two or three minutes, returned into the vestry, again bowing the knee, as he passed the altar. I did not know, at the time, the object of those boxes, and of the priest's sitting in one, but am informed, it is the confessionary, and the priest repairs to it, to afford any one an opportunity to confess. The sides are full of little holes, that if the penitent is unwilling to be seen by the priest, he may whisper into his ear, unseen. If, on this occasion, there were any confessions, they were very short.

Now, my dear child, I have given you a brief account of Catholic worship. I would not say that it is unedifying to Catholics; indeed of the few worshippers present, most had much appearance of solemnity and feeling. I hope it was heartfelt, and acceptable to God. To me, however, who know too little of the meaning of all I saw, *it was bodily exercise, which profiteth little*. The people worship, I may say, by proxy; the priest prays, but is not heard, and if he were, it is in an unknown tongue. It is worship addressed to the eyes only; a solemn pantomime which may affect the imagination, and awaken feeling, but not adapted, I should think, to produce distinct thoughts of the great Object of worship. It seems not likely to carry the thoughts beyond the cross, and the awful sufferer there, to God, the ultimate object of homage and trust. I should fear that worshippers in this mode, stop at the *door*, instead of entering into the *presence* of the great Supreme, and that they confound in their minds, the *one God*, with the *one Mediator between God and man*. However, my dear child, I have lived too long, and observed too much, to condemn, with bitter censures, those who differ from me in modes and forms, and even in faith. I will hope that, when I saw the breast smitten, with an earnestness like that of the Publican, there was true contrition; and that instruction given by simple signs, may cleave to the heart with a renovating influence. It becomes all to remember, that without holiness, all worship is

vain ; and that with holiness, many errors will be forgiven by a God delighting in mercy. Let me hope, my dear child, that with more ample instruction than is here enjoyed, with the Scriptures open before you, with weekly exhortations in the sanctuary, with the pure elements of the Gospel imparted to you in the Sabbath School, with domestic devotions, and songs to enkindle pious affections, you will indeed be a pious child ; that to means so ample, you will add your own humble endeavors and prayers daily ; and may God bless *my* child and make her *his*.

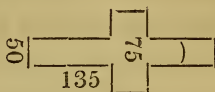
LETTER XIX.

TO MRS A—— E—— G——.

MATANZAS, MARCH 13th, 1828.

I AM almost ashamed to sit down again to write another letter to go by the same vessel, for which I have already written three, two of them, long enough for a half dozen. But I know you will excuse what flows from affection, and at the same time, pleasantly employs my time. Last evening, Mr F.'s clarionet lulled me to sleep about ten o'clock, and this morning, I rose at the tolling of the bell for matins. With a huge cane, to defend myself from dogs, no despicable danger in this country, I sallied out to witness the scene in the church, and to join in the devotion, so far as a Protestant conscientiously might, and on a consecrated spot, at least to be devout in my own way. I have been analyzing my motives for going ; and possibly, *curiosity*, a *desire* to form an equitable idea of Catholic worship, that I might do it no injustice in my thoughts, or my descriptions, and the love I feel for a house of God, and for anything, which can seem sincere worship of the Supreme Being, all entered into the complex motive, which carried me abroad so early, for it was yet dark, when I reached the church. The doors were not yet opened, and I surveyed the exterior, and measured as

well as I could, its length and breadth. It is larger than I had judged it to be. The length of the building is about 135 feet. This measure, however, includes the appendage to the west end, which is, I suppose, the residence of the priests, as well as the vestry. This is its form.



Over the centre is a concave, and a semi-concave on three sides. There is nothing elegant in the material or finish of the exterior, nor of the interior, except that the altars are with gorgeous ornaments; twisted pillars, adorned with brass or gold leaf. Over a side altar, I observed a small glazed recess, the shrine of the Virgin, I believe in wax. In two recesses or niches, with splendid apparel, were two saints, as I observed, in a former letter; one, the patron saint of the city, with a mitre and a crosier, and the other, with something like a crown. It was still dark when I entered the church, and I passed a devotee near the door, the only one arrived. He was contemplating a painting of the Saviour, I think as baptized of John; and stood crossing himself, with much appearance of mental prayer. Soon after, he advanced to a picture of the Virgin, and his devotions were renewed, and near that spot, he sunk on his knees. An attendant came in, and from a lamp burning in the centre of the church, lighted two wax tapers, and set them on the front altar. Worshippers began to come in, and I recognised the faces of most whom I had seen there before, which led me to think that they were nearly the same individuals, who always attend. The old men were the same, and some of the women. Three negro boys, well dressed, came in and kneeled on their handkerchiefs; after a while, they rose, and went near a side altar, and kneeled again, and in the most solemn part of the service, they advanced beyond all others, and kneeled on the step leading towards the front altar, where the priest was officiating. A black woman decently dressed, advanced far, and kneeled;

rose and kneeled again close to a side altar, and after service, if I was not mistaken in the individual, she was full ten minutes kneeling and confessing to a priest. Several ladies came in and kneeled on rugs, spread by a servant, who kneeled behind them. Some of them had prayer books in which they read; and then, closing them, clasped their hands, looking to the altar and cross, as if in mental prayer. The countenances of several, which I had seen in church before, were those of sincere and intense devotion. I saw none that came in without crossing themselves, and most of them, after touching the holy water; the first that I mentioned, who was alone in the church when I entered, made sundry applications to the font, and then to his crown, and face and breast. The service was the same as mentioned in a former letter; short and inaudible; full of genuflections, bending of the body, osculation of the altar, elevation of the host, and parting of the hands, as the priest turned and looked at the people.

After the service was closed, the officiating priest retired into the vestry and returned in a black gown and sat in one of the confessionaries. The negro, just mentioned, was the first to confess, and was long and earnest, resting her hand against the side of the confessionary, holding a shawl up, as if to prevent being seen and heard. She applied her mouth to a tin plate full of small holes or perforations, as of a grater, on one side, and the priest his ear on the other. When she retired, several were in waiting, kneeling near by, and one or two of them reading in their prayer book. But the priest beckoned an infirm old man, and he approached and kneeled on his footstool in front. The priest rested his hand on the penitent's shoulder, and their heads being near together, a short confession was made, and I presume, absolution given, as he was one of two only, who kneeled a little while after, at the side altar, and received the wafer. As soon as he retired, an elderly woman kneeled at the side of the confessionary, and was soon dismissed. A young lady then kneeled, with her face turned

to the wall ; but the priest for the present, neglecting his office, beckoned to an officer in partial uniform, several times. He, however, not understanding his intention, or perhaps, wishing to decline confession, kept his place in the floor. The priest then descended from the confessional and reached out his hand to him, for a *pinch of snuff*, which was readily granted, and he returned to listen to the youthful and beautiful sinner, still patiently kneeling.

This scene affected me. Why this kneeling to a human creature, in confession, while, if real penitents, they might go to the Fountain of mercy, and cry with David, *against thee, thee only, have I sinned*, and with the Publican, *God be merciful to me a sinner*, and return in peace.

During these confessions, and in full view of them, another service was preparing and performing at the altar in the right hand recess, where, above the cross, the Virgin is enshrined. Another priest in white, with a resplendent mantle depending from his shoulders, attended by a priest in black, half covered by a short white frock, commenced a service, in which the consecrated wafer was to be given to persons kneeling at the enclosure. As the service here, and at the principal altar were both inaudible, I could not ascertain in what respects they differed, except that here was chanting. A priest, far off in the gallery chanted, and a response was made from the altar. It ceased, and incense was burned, and the host and cross enveloped in the smoke. Brief prayers were recited, and the priests at the altars chanted, and the priest in the distant gallery responded. I thought I could distinguish among the words, "*Ave Maria*." The host was elevated, after the usual genuflections ; the incense was repeated ; and the priest, with a silver chalice in his hand, advanced to the enclosure, and laid the adored wafer in the mouth of a middle aged female and an old man. The latter manifested considerable emotion, eagerly bending forward to receive, as he esteemed it, the real body and blood of his Lord. Ah me ! how simple was the ordi-

nance as Christ left it, the very point of which, is given in those few words of the Institutor,—*This do in remembrance of me.* Whence are derived these additions, which draw away the mind of the communicant, to anything, rather than the design of the institution? The adoring postures of the body, the chants to the Virgin, if I am correct, the fumes of incense, the gift of the wafer, and the denial of the cup:—in vain I look for these things in Matthew or Mark, Luke or Paul. It must be acknowledged that Catholic views of this ordinance would be very affecting, if they were just and true; but we must be as cautious not to add anything to the word of God, as not to take anything away; the curse is denounced against both errors, if wilful. “My dear Sir,” said an ardent Catholic to me, “how different are your views of the Lord’s Supper, from ours! You receive bread and wine, in *remembrance* of the death of Christ. But when *we* kneel at the altar, and the host is elevated, we *see* our God; when the priest places within our lips the consecrated wafer, we *receive* our God; we swallow it and are *filled* with our God.” Impossible; for how can a material vessel contain an infinite spirit. No such thing is taught, is intimated in the word of God, but the contrary—*No man hath seen God at any time.* A view or notion may be very affecting, yet very false, whether of the ordinance of the Supper, or of the person of the blessed Saviour. To make correct impressions on the mind and to excite suitable affections in the heart, our notions of both must not be extravagant, but true; not superstitious, but just and scriptural. It is not safe to err on the right or the left.

I have been minute in the narrative of the scenes of this morning, that you may judge of Catholic worship by facts, simply stated; not distorted. Have you not found the dying command of Christ, observed with Protestant simplicity, deeply affecting to you, and among the most precious means of awakening spiritual affections, and confirming pious resolutions, and filling the soul with hope, and peace, and joy? More and more

may it contribute to the vigor of your faith, and the brightness of your graces, till you may be translated to behold your Saviour, without the cloud of ordinances, in all his effulgent glory, at the right hand of his Father.

* * * Mr C. and I have engaged horses for Havana, to start on Tuesday next at day break. We are to visit the Pan of Matanzas, sleep at Mrs J.'s coffee plantation; next day visit the springs of Madruga, &c. In the third day, Deo volente, we shall be in the neighborhood of Havana, but shall shun the spot if there is danger, which we shall ascertain by the safest counsel. Then we shall probably pass to the leeward, and spending a week or two, shall hope to return to Matanzas and Sumidero; a spot loved next, I may almost say, to *home*.

LETTER XX.

TO MRS E—— A——.

MATANZAS, MARCH 14th, 1828.

* * * THERE is no subject so important as religion, involving, as it does, the dearest interests of both worlds; none about which there is such diversity of opinions, while it is greatly important that we form those which are correct. We imbibe instruction from parental lips and other sources, long before we are capable of forming a sound judgment, as to the correctness of it. It is right we should do so; yet in maturer years, we should *prove all things, and hold fast that, alone, which is good*, remembering that for the truths we embrace, and the rites we observe, we are responsible to God; and that to our Master, we must stand or fall.

The Catholic religion is little understood in our land; in the country, there are few that profess it, and in the city, there are few Protestants that frequent their meetings; and when they do, there is a degree of conformity to Protestant custom, at least,

in giving instruction to the people, which makes the difference of the two forms of religion less striking—less revolting. I have long believed, that there has been a reforming influence from Protestantism in Rome itself; and it is to be expected, that this influence will be greater on a church settled in the midst of Protestants. I have occasionally, in my own country, attended Catholic worship on marked days in the calendar, and have heard the venerable Bishop Cheverus in a fine strain of persuasive eloquence; one or two others of superior talents I have listened to with pleasure; and this was seeing Romish priests to the highest advantage.

In an island where there is no religion professed but the Catholic, I have been anxious to see, and careful to observe how it appears at home. Though to different members of the family, I have already written much, I hope you will not be impatient in receiving still another letter on the subject. Last evening, in company with Mr C. and Mr C., who understands Spanish well, we called on one of the most respectable of the padres, with a letter of recommendation. We found him at home, in a handsome and well-furnished house, fronting the Plaza, or mall of the city. Everything around him looked domestic, and as if he was little acquainted with apostolic poverty. Pictures of high value, adorned his parlor and study. A library of several hundred volumes, and many in elegant bindings, with tables and leaves to accommodate a student, gave intimations of learning. A priest from Italy was introduced to us, and several ladies met us at the door, and were afterwards alluded to by the padre as his sisters. He is a fleshy, but good looking man, in a black cassock, and with a small tonsure of his bushy locks on the top of his head, shaven closer than his chin—it was, however, Saturday evening. We attempted conversation in Latin, but on account of our different pronunciation of all the vowels, and some of the consonants, it was not an easy mode of communication. He was often, however, intelligible, and commonly prompt in his Latin, and generally compre-

hended my meaning. Sometimes I availed myself of my interpreter ; and our conversation took considerable range with regard to our several churches and views of religion. He wished to know, how my place was supplied in my absence, and whether I could communicate all my power to my substitute ; and if he could not marry in my absence, who could,—for people, in such cases, would not wait.

We conversed on our different modes of communion, and he led me to a picture exactly like that which hangs in our parlor, and supposed our mode answered to it. Without enlarging, his manners were full of courtesy, and his conversation without bigotry ; and to explain the Catholic mode of communion, he invited me to approach near the altar on the following morning, when he should administer it.

On the morning of the sabbath, I attended the earliest service of the church. The tapers were soon lighted at the left hand of the altar, and the attendant drew up the curtain, and revealed the crucifixion in wooden or wax figures, as large as life. The sufferer had bowed his head, and given up the ghost. The countenance of death—the nails through his hands, knees, and feet—the blood gushing over his limbs, and down his side, presented an affecting, an awful object, which seemed to excite a strong emotion on those around me, as like the real spectators of the crucifixion, *they smote on their breasts*. Three women, the virgin mother distinguished from the rest, stood and knelt around the cross.

Before this scene, an aged priest, his hair as white as snow, performed mass. Whether it was that the crucifixion is here more affectingly displayed, than at the other altars, or that the aged form of the priest, and his tremulous, yet louder voice, his longer pauses and prostrations, giving time for the feelings to rise and strengthen, and the greater appearance of his being himself moved, produced the effect, I know not, but the assembly was more generally affected than I had witnessed at any other performance of mass, and it was also, a larger assembly

that attended. How lasting, how holy, how sanctifying were the impressions made, and the emotions kindled by this strong appeal to the senses, the great Searcher of hearts can tell. But I believe it is ever found, that passionate feelings subside quickly, whether produced by strong pictures addressed to the eye, vehement tones to the ear, or strong images to the imagination ; and that, to affect a man lastingly, his understanding must be distinctly convinced and enlightened, and his conscience subjected to truth and principle.

My friend, the padre, who had invited me to the church, had not yet appeared. I waited, therefore, through the interval of service, as did forty or fifty others, it may have been twenty minutes. The bell was again tolled, and at the same time, the distant note of the bugle was heard, alternating with the drum and fife, and a company of soldiers in uniform, with a quick step, and animated air, marched into the centre of the church, and stood ranged in a solid square. At the same time, my friend appeared at the front altar, in canonicals, attended by a cadet with his broadsword suspended from his shoulder behind him ; and as the priest kneeled, the drum and fife rang a shrill salute. The service was as usual, and at every signal of the little bell, the drum and fife cheered, and the church resounded with martial notes, in the most solemn crises of the service ; the soldiers kneeling, crossing themselves, and striking upon the breast. The band seemed to go through the duty with the same precision, and with the same feelings, as through the drill on parade.

My untrained feelings were somewhat shocked with the pomp and circumstance of war, thus mingled with the most awful rites of our religion—the clangor of arms with the holy communion, in which the soul wishes to muse in grateful and awful silence, and to dissolve in tears of love and contrition.

The sabbath, seems no sabbath to me, in a Catholic country. Many shops I see open, and all kinds of articles are selling. The horses of burden, in strings of from ten to thirty, throng

the streets. As you pass to church, even at sunrising, the noisy gaming tables force themselves on your notice, with eager gamblers pitching a coin at the columns of silver. Some with cocks are going to the pits, while a few are going to mass. Many resort to the country, to contemplate its beautiful scenes, and to enjoy its abundant hospitalities, and as a respite from the cares of the week. And some, I hope, in retirement, are seeking from prayer and the word of God, that instruction, and consolation, which are but sparingly, if at all, imparted in the sanctuary. The American merchants close their doors, and I believe merchants universally; and it is thought proper that the morning should be given to devotion, and the rest of the day, to amusement. But the number is small, who perform the first part of the arrangement, and with many, the whole day is devoted to amusement, and, with not a few, to gambling and other vices, even more than ordinary days.

LETTER XXI.

TO MRS E—— A——.

MATANZAS, MARCH 15th, 1828.

* * * * MATANZAS, by a sudden growth, has become a considerable city, and is destined to be a great one. Eighteen years ago it was but a little larger than Cardenas; most of its growth has been within ten years. The country makes the town; and the fertile region in its neighborhood, which is fast settling, and pouring its important staples into its bosom, will swell its population. The government is aware of its importance and its prospects. Extensive barracks are building on a favorable site, on the western side of the bay; and it is said that the custom-house will be removed to the same neighbor-

hood; and even the bay to a certain depth of water at its southern extremity, is filled up, and let as building ground. It is possible, that the natural advantages of this harbor, its healthfulness, and the multiplying settlements around it, may render it as commercially important as Havana itself.

The custom-house is conspicuously situated, on a rise of ground, in front of the town, and at the bottom of the bay. It is a handsome building, one story high, with a colonnade in front, and arches between the pillars, and is spacious and airy. There are not many buildings of much beauty in the place; the handsomest are private. The plaza, or public square, is handsome, though small, enclosing perhaps a couple of acres. In the centre of this square a monument is erecting it is supposed to receive a statue of their illustrious prince, Ferdinand. It is small at the base, and with a slender shaft, rising twelve or fifteen feet. A flagged path leads to the monument from each corner; and a smooth pavement of beaten mortar a dozen yards wide, with seats at small intervals, of stone covered with mortar, skirt the square. On two sides fronting the plaza, the houses are handsome: some of them ornamented with paintings of an humble character. A new house, for a lawyer, is up, but not finished, which exhibits much real taste, on the Spanish plan. Most of the houses of this place are of a single story; but this is in parts from fifteen to twenty feet high. You enter through a spacious door into a hall, which serves for an entry, and frequently also to accommodate the volante. Besides this spacious entry, there is, fronting on the street also, the drawing-room, with two windows, wide enough to admit the volante, were they not obstructed by iron or wooden gratings, projecting a little way into the street. There is no glass to these windows, and the whole room is open to the closest inspection of the street. The door opposite the windows is fifteen feet high in the model before me, and proportionably wide; the whole adapted to circulate a current of air in this hot climate through the house into a court in the style of an Eastern building, at the end of which are pleasant lodging chambers. This

mode of building is outre to American eyes, but I doubt not it is prudently adapted to a hot climate, as our mode is to a cold one.

With a small party in a boat, under an awning, I had the pleasure of ascending about five or six miles the river San Juan, which enters the bay from the southeast. We had a better view of the town than we had seen from any other point. A large building on the border of the river was pointed out to us, which was the grand depository of piratical wealth, while those corsairs were unchecked. We passed by the spacious house occupied by the Governor, and the circus devoted to cockfighting, filled to overflowing with the sportsmen—and were soon beyond the city. We met many boats, some of which were American, returning with water dipped out of the stream. The stream is about a hundred and fifty yards wide, the banks covered with trees, mangrove, and wild cane. We passed an extensive garden of vegetables, raised, we supposed, for the city, and two or three plantations. The scenery increased in beauty as we got into the country; and as we passed over the unrippled flood, the banks were beautifully reflected, and every object defined in the perfect mirror. An exclamation of delight burst from the whole party, as we saw a perpendicular bank with two white rocks just at the water's edge, the object and image seeming suspended over a convex sky.

We debarked at the estate of the Marquis of Padramano. At this point in the river is a mill; and the river in full view of the mansion falls romantically over a bed of rocks, in two separate sheets. The mansion is an ancient building, spacious rather than elegant. Attached to it on the west side, is a chapel of handsome appearance, the interior of which we had no opportunity of examining. Over the arched entrance to the chapel hung two good sized bells; and we were informed that mass is said in this chapel every Sunday. We passed through the court of the mansion under the conduct of a gentleman of our party acquainted with the Marquis, into beautiful gardens, the air at every step being filled with fragrance from innumerable

flowers. We entered over a bridge thrown across a stone basin of pure water brought into the gardens from the river by a duct. From this reservoir it is distributed about the gardens for the purpose of irrigation. A considerable space of ground is occupied with walks, and trees, and shrubbery, and flowers, laid out with taste, and grown into their most perfect state, without as yet attaining the point of decay. The cypress sends up its slender and beautiful cone forty or fifty feet, its form and dark rich verdure attracting and delighting every eye. Bowers are covered with ornamental vines on three sides, and the graceful arch, and are open on the fourth side, to invite the visitant to its thick shade. The mayoral, in the absence of the noble proprietor, with true Spanish politeness attended us through the grounds, and took leave of us at the bridge.

It was nightfall before we reached the city, and the smell of the mangrove growing in and out of the water, sometimes wet with the tide, and sometimes dry, was so offensive, that we dismissed the boat, and walked into the town. It is thought that this nuisance at the most unfavorable season of the year, occasions a malignant fever.

From a Spanish gentleman of respectability I have obtained some information of the windward coast for forty leagues, which he has traversed both by land and water. The face of the country is in general champaign; and well wooded, with few estates regularly settled as coffee or sugar plantations. The Monteros occupy it in a patriarchal style, farming, and grazing, and logging, for their subsistence and wealth. They live chiefly on pork, and plantains, and water. The father of a small clan settles on a few hundred acres, and as his sons and daughters marry, he portions them with parts of his land, and a few oxen and hogs, and families multiply around him. They have no priests among them, and are entirely ignorant of books. On the sabbath the families pass the day with the patriarch. They recite prayers, and children ask, and the parents bestow their

blessing. There is great simplicity among them ; an utter detestation of theft, and thieves, and the kindest hospitality. In passing weeks with these people, every door was open to him, and every kindness rendered ; and all compensation declined. Their costume is simple ; white frock and trousers ; a belted machet on one side, and a knife on the other.

LETTER XXII.

TO MRS E—— A——.

MATANZAS, MARCH 18th, 1828.

YESTERDAY, by an arrangement of our Consul, a Quaker of Philadelphia, and a shrewd man, a large party was formed to visit a splendid cave on the estate of a Scotsman, Mr M. The cognomen of the estate is the St Eloisa. The Consul placed me on his own noble horse, and took another himself, "because," as he said, "he knew his own to be safe. The stranger which he rode, proved himself vicious, by throwing his light heels, when he was in full trot, at Mr C.'s quiet horse. Missing the horse, he hit the rider with one hoof, on his right knee, and the other on his left thigh. The effect, however, was little more than the impression of the hoofs on Mr C.'s snowy trousers, in a deep tinge of greasy, snuff colored soil. The mouth of the cave is in the midst of a plain, and there is neither mountain nor hill near it. It had been prepared for exhibition, by spermaceti tapers set on natural candlesticks of petrification, as beacons on our return passage, and for illumination. Through an aperture of two yards diameter, we looked down into a vast rotunda, fiftyfive feet deep ; but entered at a small distance, by a sloping and circuitous passage, which brought us to a strong ladder, and by this we reached the bottom of the dome. Our next descent was over a convex slope, studded with short knobs of petrification, which secured our foothold,

and at no great distance, we arrived at our greatest descent, about eightyfive or ninety feet from the surface. The immense cavern is of irregular form, height, and width. The roof is sometimes twenty or thirty feet high, and sometimes so low that we were obliged to cower, so as not to strike against the watery icicles. Bats, innumerable, we saw clinging to the higher parts of the cave, especially where a dome seemed to terminate in a lofty cupola. We came to a number of clear springs, and refreshed ourselves with the cool water, after guarding our stomachs by something warmer. The stalactites were dull and dusty near the mouth of the cave, where the air could dry its moisture, but farther in, and especially in little recesses from the main cavern, they were brilliant. Here a Northerner seemed to find his path encrusted with icy snow ; there a huge drift of snow lay piled against the wall, as if it would tempt a playful boy to bury himself in it. Sometimes the hanging stalactites had united with the erect, and in the course of, probably, many centuries, the union, by drop after drop, had become a massy pillar, sufficient to sustain the incumbent roof. Again, we saw the pillar thus formed, broken, and lying in ruins, like fragments of an Egyptian temple. Several times we saw the pillar broken, and the lower part fallen a few inches from the upper, as if the bottom of the cave had sunk a little, while the arch above, with its fixtures, remained firm. There was an indescribable variety of brilliant formations, which arrested the eye at every step ; and a slight effort of the imagination could make them curtains of elegant material, and graceful fold, fringes of fine linen, ornaments of alabaster, the mother with an infant clasped in her arms, a patriarch, and families standing round him for his blessing, and almost what you pleased.

To what extent we might have pursued our researches, is uncertain, or in how many directions. One of the party, who has had experience in exploring caves, and has taste and science to relish them, on a former occasion had pursued a dif-

ferent route, and penetrated as far as on the present occasion. We were at length arrested by fatigue, and with general consent, though some were still eager, and in advance, we beat the retreat, loading our porters with spoils for our respective friends, and public cabinets. We were inhumed two hours, and by the most moderate and deliberate judgment of the party, had travelled a mile in one continuous cavern.

We returned, to a splendid dinner at Mr M.'s, and thence to Matanzas, at twilight. In this excursion of seven or eight miles, a few circumstances were amusing, and worth notice. Among all the varieties in caparisoning and riding horses and mules, in this country, nothing strikes me more oddly than the unsettled question, how a lady should sit on an animal. We met gentlemen and ladies mounted, and one lady with her feet on the right, and another, with hers on the left of her horse. As we passed in the highway, not far from the bay of Matanzas, we discovered land crabs, in considerable numbers, on their migration, it seems, to the beach. Some were dead, crushed by the careless foot of the horse, and others moved instinctively out of our way into the bushes, in a smart walk, on their long legs, and with their lobster-like claws, or nippers. Their bodies are not large, but, in motion, showy. Probably the dryness and general warmth of the winter has precipitated their movement, which commonly begins about the first of May.

In our course to Mr V.'s, the brother-in-law of the Consul, we crossed a small river, over which a bridge had been thrown in arches. It was of stone, laid in mortar; but such was the force of the torrent descending from the mountains in the rainy season, that a part of the bridge was carried away, leaving the remainder useless. I was astonished to see young trees, one or two, I judged, eight or ten feet high, already growing out of the mortar, of that perpendicular part of the bridge, which is yet in perfect preservation.

You may be surprised to hear that the last two nights have been *bitter cold*—Yes, between the tropics, bitter cold! The

night before the last, I was aware of the change, and in addition to my blankets, I piled on my coat and surtout, expecting soon to throw them off; but I held them fast till morning. Last night was still colder, and I laid a friend's heavy camblet cloak on my bed, besides an extra blanket, and yet I actually dreamed of snow; and snowy was the feeling of my skin through the night. I trust I have not taken any material cold, though there is something of that uncomfortable feeling in the throat, to which you have known me subject heretofore, causing a constant effort to swallow. This morning I feel well, and have breakfasted well, and at table found that I was not alone in feeling the chill of the night. The mercury was, this morning, not at zero, as from my complaint you may imagine, but at 58°. This would not be thought much of, at Bangor, or Hallowell, or even at Brunswick, or Beverly; but I assure you it feels like zero here. I cannot account for the severity of cold, with mercury so little depressed. It is not the state of my health or blood as an invalid; for this morning we saw creoles sunning themselves under easterly aspects, and catching from that beneficent luminary, warmth, which they have no fire-places nor stoves to impart, in their houses.

This is fine weather for our journey to Havana, and I regret that Mr C. needs this day to pack off his specimens and letters to New-York. Tomorrow we hope to start. We understand it is a good road. I have seen a gentleman who came through in a volante, on Sunday, and arrived before evening; we, on horseback, may easily perform the journey in three days, and have leisure to see the curious and the beautiful by the way. I have formed an acquaintance with Senor M., one of the Intendant's Council, and perhaps the first merchant in Havana; a gentleman of great information, of liberal views for a Catholic, yet excellently informed in all matters concerning the church, and of very ready communication. I have already derived valuable information from him; and he has given me his address, and proffered to me an introduction to the Vicar-General,

not in the highest office, but the best informed ecclesiastic in Havana. From this gentleman and his partner, three days from that city, I learn that there is no sickness in the city, and now, little or none, in the harbor of Havana. I know how sensitive my family and friends are about that place, and what rumors they may hear, and what suspicions they may have of my prudence; but, as I have stated in my last letters, so I state again, it is my intention to run into no danger, knowingly, and I have the means of being exactly informed.

P. M. We are *all aback again*, as the sailors say at sea. This morning we selected our horses; but have been able to find no guide for the journey, who understands any English. Now, a guide that can neither learn what we want of him, nor impart any information, or if we get into any sort of trouble, can help us, is but a blind man leading the blind. In dining with some of our best friends today, our difficulties were stated, and Mr C. agrees, if we will wait a few days, and will go through in two, he will go with us; and even Mr and Mrs S. have some thoughts of going. This would render the journey every way safe and pleasant. It is probable, therefore, that we shall start at the beginning of the week.

We have much occasion to regret our delay, as this week there is to be the greatest parade, ever witnessed in Havana. A new chapel has been built, and is to be dedicated. Its site is the spot where Columbus first performed mass, and the chapel is *in rei memoriam perpetuam*. Five thousand troops are to parade; the aged, and popular, and venerable Bishop, is to appear in his pontificals; an orator is to be eloquent on the historical subject, and very eloquent on the Queen, whose birthday has been selected for the occasion. Little, probably, will be said about Columbus, for whom everybody feels a deep interest, and much about the Queen, for whom nobody cares a half-bit. Doubtless the church will bring forth its host of saints, in their gayest attire, and whole canons and half canons, padres and monks, will bask in the radiance of this great occa-

sion. It is possible, however, that the monks may be denied their expected place in the procession, for they are no favorites with the Bishop and Intendant. Two hundred of them recently arrived from Mexico, from which they have been expatriated. But the civil and ecclesiastical authority give them no welcome. I am credibly informed, that vessels, leaving port, for Old Spain, are required each to take a number of them. Some of them have contrived to bring away from Mexico, heavy funds, which looks like honor and honesty in the government.

When the Cortes were in power in Old Spain, and the revolution was thought established, a decree was sent to this island, to confiscate an immense establishment of monks at the leeward, below Havana, possessing property to the amount of \$3,000,000, (an amount probably over estimated.) The friends of the monks kept back the decree, for a few days, and gave them information of the impending calamity. They made every exertion, day and night, to remove their valuables and great treasures from their churches. Even the sugars, from their estates, were in places of security, before the troops arrived, who commenced a general sack. My respectable informant saw many articles of the plunder brought by officers and men, to Matanzas. I understand, that they were re-established with considerable loss, by the counter-revolution.

It is evident that changes of some importance in the ecclesiastical state of things on this island, are taking place. The popular Bishop of Havana, it is said, was not very unfriendly to the constitutional government of 1812, if I mistake not the year. On the overthrow of the Cortes, and the recovery of the king's prerogative, the Bishop was recalled by the king; but interest was made for his continuance, and through condescension to the people, or fear of their instability and power, he has been since continued in office. He has a revenue of \$100,000, and is said to expend it in beautifying the city. He exercises authority over the monks, with a degree of rigor, it is said, and pronounces them idle and vicious, and a disgrace

to the church. But to the priests, who are laborers in the church, he is indulgent, and on one subject, it is rumored, he is improperly so. If complaints are made against them, that they have females in their houses, and young families growing up under their fostering, he will not listen to such scandal, whatever evidence there may be, but dismisses the complainants with a reprimand. Indeed, it is become a common thing, that a padre will express his regret that the church has decreed the celibacy of the clergy, and his hope and belief that marriage will be permitted; and this he will say, even to foreigners. But there is language more definite than this, in the pretty general practice of the priests, and the connivance of the Bishop. One of the most respectable and decent of them, has a *nephew* in America, for his education, over which he presides with a solicitude truly parental. Another, within a circle where my information cannot be erroneous, has a beautiful niece to keep and cheer his bachelor's hall. But, enough on this subject, and surely, it is quite sufficient to set aside the ancient and traditionary argument for clerical celibacy,—that those who elevate the hostè, (so they pronounce it,) and impart the deified wafer to others, must themselves be as spotless as angels, who neither *marry, nor are given in marriage*. Herbert, one of the earliest of English poets, said—

“How pure must those hands be,
Which bring my God to me.”

Today is a *half cross* day—a saint's day—to be observed with special religious services, and many ringings of the bells; and yet, business is not wholly laid aside, as on *whole cross* days. The two species of days are thus marked in the calendar, † ‡; or thus, for a half cross day, +; for a whole, ++. This is St Joseph's day—the patron saint of the collector of the port; so he refuses any goods to be landed on this day. I attended church a little after sunrise. The mass was celebrated, and St Jose exhibited in great splendor near the altar. He was gorgeously dressed, standing in front of a red velvet

hanging, with, I suppose, an olive branch in one hand, and the holy infant resting on the other. St Jose has a devotional look, and leaning of his head, except that he has military mustachios. The collector, (I believe I was not mistaken in his person,) on this occasion, stood near the altar, three steps above the congregation; indulged with this distinction, probably, on account of his relationship to the saint.

Since I have been in Matanzas, I have thrown my thoughts on subjects around me, into letters for home, instead of into my journal. It is a livelier mode of writing, and may gratify my family more than to see things gravely related, when I may arrive at home. I am not certain, that, on some subjects, my earliest impressions are correct. I am daily learning; and sometimes, see cause to qualify a former observation. This caution may be needless.

LETTER XXIII.

TO MRS ——— ———.

MATANZAS, MARCH 19th, ST. JOSE'S DAY, 1828.

* * * I HAVE concluded in this letter, to touch subjects not of much dignity, yet too characteristic of the country, to be passed over in silence. Occasionally, I have just touched the ox of the country; he really deserves particular mention and respect.

In this country, they are not large, compared with those of our own country, but powerful, and tame, and docile, as the Boston truck horses; in fact, they are used in the city for the same purposes, as those excellent animals. You may sometimes see a mule in a dray or cart, but usually the trucking of Matanzas is performed by *Cuba oxen*.

Their harnessing strikes me oddly, but I really am convinced that they can draw more, and with much less inconvenience to

themselves, than if harnessed in the American mode. I have taken pains to observe the difference. In the American mode, the oxbow in a strong draught, presses with great force, against parts that are tender and fleshy, against the passage for the breath, and against bones and joints of but secondary strength. This pressure must in some measure, affect the wind ; and if it do not excoriate, it must render flesh and skin tender ; and we actually observe the animals after resting awhile, shrinking from the touch of the bow, as a blistered breast from the touch of the nurse. If this is a correct statement, it will account for the greater indocility of the American oxen, and for, what I believe to be the honest fact, their drawing less than those of Cuba.

The yoke, in the Spanish mode, is made fast to the horns near the root behind, so that it does not play backward and forward, and gives to the oxen, a similar, but *better* chance of backing, (as in teamster's phrase, it is called.) I have been astonished at the power of these oxen, in holding back. There is a short hill, in one of the streets of this city, at an angle, nearly of 45° . Standing at the foot of it, I saw a cart and oxen approaching at the top with three hogsheads of molasses, and the driver sitting on the forward cask. The driver did not so much as leave his perch ; the oxen went straight and fearless over the pitch of the hill, and it seemed as if they must be crushed to death. The animals squatted like a dog, and rather slid, than walked to the bottom of the hill. Have we any animals that could have done it? And if they could, have we any docile enough to have done it with the driver in the cart? Thus superior is this mode of yoking in holding back the load in difficult places.

It gives them still more decisive advantage, in drawing. A fillet of canvas is laid on the front below the horns ; and over this fillet the cords pass, and the animal presses against the most invulnerable part of his frame ; his head, his neck, his whole frame are exerted in the very manner in which he exerts his

mighty strength in combat. It is the *natural* way, therefore, of availing yourself of this powerful and patient animal to the best advantage.

There is a third peculiarity in managing the ox in the Spanish mode, of the convenience of which, I am better satisfied, than of the humanity. The cartilage between the nostrils is perforated, and a rope is fastened to the nose of each animal, and they are governed by the reins, like horses, and are stopped, or turned to the right or left, or forced backward, with all imaginable ease; I have seen no animal so fierce or sullen, as not to be pliable as a lamb, by this check rein. The drivers seldom speak to them; they intimate their pleasure by the rein, and quicken their pace by the goad, but never strike them. They, in general, move quick; I have often seen them on the trot; and next to horses, they seem the best disciplined animals I have seen in the service of man. If the force of habit and prejudice could so far give way in our country, as to make the experiment, I think Yankees, with all their shrewdness, might take a valuable lesson from Spaniards.

In a team of four or six oxen, the forward pair, usually draws by a long cord, with space between them and the rest of the team, for another pair. This appears uncouth, and ordinarily is, I should think, a disadvantage. The reason given for it, belongs to bad roads—that when the rest of the team is swamped, the forward cattle may draw them out. They have little to do with chains, but draw by a pole, fixed at each end with ropes, or thongs of leather.

On the whole, looking back on what I have written to a lady, I cannot help smiling at the incongruity of the subject and address. Will it be any compensation if I proceed to another subject, over which you may both laugh and weep?

Mr C., our friend R. and myself, took a walk to a stable, to provide our horses for Havana. I had the quickest eye on this occasion, and fixed upon a little fat dumpling with two eyes; Mr C. was obliged to content himself with one eye less, made

up, however, by more extent of bones. My judgment was somewhat sharpened and quickened by the apprehension that my very good friend would, on this occasion, as when we were competitors for a single curiosity, speak quick and say—"give me that," as in the case of a wild negro's ingenious pouch, at Mr M.'s, while I was evidently paving the way, with some civil circumlocution to pocket it, he cut straight across, and, with three words, seized the pouch. As his adroitness raised a laugh, I thought it fair immediately to add, "*and give me the contents.*" After winning the better prize, however, I gave it up to him, a wax candle of the negro's manufacture excepted, which you will find in the box with specimens of shells. The money, however, according to a rule of the plantation was given to the captors, with the ordinary fee of \$4.

But to return. After leaving the stable, we saw, a few rods further on the street, a volante, orange boys, men and boys and bustle, as if some extraordinary business was in hand. It was the hour of *cock fighting*, and *there* was the pit or theatre. As this is a scandalous trait in the Spanish character, and observable in every town and village, and seems the passion of this people, it was proposed we should look in. In every point of view but one, I could detest the thought of leaving a footprint on such ground; but as a Christian philosopher, studying mankind, in the *Spanish* species, and this barbarous diversion reflects a baleful light on the subject, I consented. It is a round building sixty feet diameter, well covered, with circular seats and boxes rising from the area one above another, and, though not on the sabbath, the day when it is most frequented, the theatre was well filled. Twice as many persons, I think there were, as I had seen in the church when it was fullest. Elevated in a dignified pew or gallery, railed in by itself, and projecting a little toward the area, to give the most perfect view of the combat, sat the *Judge*. This important officer of justice is regularly appointed by the Governor, or Alcaldi, or otherwise, and from his decision there is no appeal.

The venerable judge was far advanced in years, to hold so important an office ; from his white locks, and wrinkled countenance, and bending frame, I should think him seventy—ten years older than Chancellor Kent, when *he* retired from the bench ; but to do his honor justice, he did not, like Philip of Macedon, nor like some of his brethren on republican benches, *sleep* while the cause was trying. However, there was an omission of one thing ; he *took no notes*. Yet I acknowledge he followed the cause through all its windings, and ups and downs, and not an argument on either side was disregarded ; nor was there, so long as I observed him, for I did not see the cause through, the least sign of favor or partiality in his countenance, nor the slightest relaxation of his gravity.

In glancing an eye round, I should think there were present a dozen or twenty cocks. Tamer birds, I never saw. They needed no confinement, but lay reclining on the hand of an owner or servant, and now and then crowing from that perch. The shears or tweezers had cleared away all needless excrescences—the comb, if they had one, the feathers about the neck and some about the tail ; and the parts had been, probably for months, so rubbed and chafed with *arguadente*, a species of spirit, that they were of blood color. A pair was soon produced, one of them by a planter of 2,000 boxes of sugar per annum ; and I saw the doubloons, (ounces, they call them) chinking in their hands. The pit was cleared. Two men approached each other with the cocks, and one bird was permitted to peck the other, to provoke him to combat, and then, the provocation being returned with spirit, they were thrown down to deadly combat. We soon left the ground, but before we went both were covered with blood, and much spent, and one of them pierced in the breast, probably with a mortal wound by his adversary's dirk. I understand they were separated for a few moments, to inflame their wounds with alcohol, and to give them spirit internally, when the combat would be renewed

to death or victory. We had no desire to see the end of the fray, and returned home with a thousand melancholy reflections.

It is to me, matter of astonishment, that a check is not given to this barbarous diversion and open gambling by the government of a Christian country. But it is, in fact, encouraged by it. I will inquire, so as to be certain that I am not misinformed, but I believe the government regulates the sport, and appoints the judge of the pit; yes, the *pit*, rightly named, and a little emblem of the *bottomless*. And I frankly acknowledge, if this gambling sport is tolerated, and the most selfish and savage passions are allowed to be roused, some presiding influence of government may be necessary, at times, to prevent deadly strife among the gamblers, as well as the cocks. You would suppose that sport and gambling of this kind, must be confined to negroes and the populace. No such thing. The Alcaldi of this city keeps ninety trained cocks for the combat, and men of immense fortunes, and some in their volantes, probably, therefore, from the country on this important business, mingle in the pit, and on the seats and boxes with boys and negroes, in perfect liberty and equality. Bets from one to twelve ounces, (in English, from seventeen to two hundred dollars,) are made on the issue of a duel between two strutting coxcombs of the pit. As if the passion had infected every man, the most unfortunate are seen at this diversion; a deaf and dumb man was there, conversing eagerly by signs, and a most helpless being, a man of forty, whom I have often seen in the street in the arms of a negro, incapable of walking, was carried to the cock-pit.

There is another favorite sport of the Spaniards, still more horrible, which nothing should tempt me to witness,—the bull-baiting. My friend and delightful companion, Mr C., while in Havana, so far subdued his fine feelings, to indulge his philosophical curiosity, as to attend on one occasion. As the animal passed into the arena, to enrage him to the utmost, (if I understood Mr C.) darts, inflamed with brimstone, were fixed in

his back. After suffering agony, for a little time, and witnessing the imminent peril of human life, and the emboweling of a noble horse by the horn of the enraged animal, Mr C. retired from the scene, exhausted, and almost fainting.

There has formerly been something of cock-fighting in our own country, and one or two attempts to introduce bull-baiting. Sincerely do I hope, that our national character will never be debased by the toleration of either. We have a free press, and some awe is felt for this noble instrument, operating on a reading people. Let its trustees watch over the morals and manners of the people, and when foreigners, or debased natives shall attempt to introduce barbarous sports, and open gambling, let them rouse the indignation of a moral and thinking people. And what the press may, at any time, be insufficient to put out of countenance, may the government suppress.

LETTER XXIV.

TO MISS A—— W—— A——.

MATANZAS, MARCH 20th, 1828.

* * * * As you have been for years geographically engaged, perhaps I may interest you with a few hints of this almost *terra incognita*. Its length and breadth you have ascertained, and its dimensions are sufficient to form a future Great Britain. The soil of the island is of three descriptions, black, red, and mulatto. The richest is the black, and best adapted to sugar; the red is good soil, and better adapted to coffee; the mulatto seems a mixture of both kinds, and answers for either species of culture. I have seen excellent cane growing on the red soil; but it was where it was deep. Near mountains, I have seen pretty extensive fields of savanna, a soil yielding sparingly of grass, bushes, and palmetto, and a slender, tall,

and useless palm, peculiar to the savanna. It is stoney; contains much of flint rock, and stone combined with iron. So far as I can judge by what I have seen, and can hear, it is an island of great vigor and fertility of soil, the barren bearing a very small proportion to that which is cultivated, or covered with a thick spontaneous growth. Mountains are found interspersed over the island, but not lofty; and there are some pretty extensive plains.

The principal defect of the island is the want of water. In the rainy season the water falls in a deluge, the brooks roar from the mountains, and the rivers are full. The fields are almost a sheet of water, and the roads are almost impassable. In other seasons showers are rare; the channels of rivers are dry; the fields are parched; and man, and bird, and beast, are straitened for one of the first blessings of bountiful nature. With great expense they sink wells from forty to three hundred and sixty feet, a great part of the depth through stone, and draw up water by the power of oxen, mules, or horses. But the most common method of furnishing the quantity of water needed for an extensive plantation is by vast tanks, made of stone, and lined with mortar and Roman cement. The coffee driers furnish ready means of collecting water to the cisterns; and the immense roofs on sugar estates may answer the same purpose.

My other letters have given you some account of the wild and cultivated growths of the island—and I shall not repeat my observations. The population of the island bears no proportion to its physical capabilities; yet it is supposed to have doubled in the last fifteen years. No recent census, however, has been taken. It is estimated to be about 800,000, of which the whites are supposed to be as four to five, or nearly 355,000 whites, and 444,000 blacks. The mass of white population is Spanish; there are many French people, particularly in and about Havana. The Americans are next in number among the foreigners, and some suppose them more numerous than the French.

There are Scotch, Germans, Dutch, Italians; but my opinion is too conjectural to be worth stating as to the proportion.

It is of more importance to observe that the free blacks are considerably numerous; the number has been stated to exceed 100,000. It is a redeeming circumstance in regard to the Spanish character, that their laws favor emancipation, and the government faithfully executes them. If the slave can present his value, nay, only his *cost*, to his master, however reluctant he may be to part with perhaps the best body servant he has, or an invaluable mechanic, or skilful driver, he cannot retain him. If he attempt to evade the demand, the captain of the Partido must enforce it, and evasion in either case is punished with high pecuniary penalties.

Nor is it so difficult a thing for a smart and saving negro to accomplish the means. Food is furnished to them so abundantly by their masters, that the fruits of their own garden may be converted into money. A certain method is to raise a hog, which they can do, to a large size, by corn of their own growing. I have seen swine belonging to slaves, worth two or three ounces, (forty or fifty dollars,) and there are purchasers enough without their carrying them to market. Live hogs are at this moment sold here at eight dollars per hundred on the hoof. At any rate, negroes make money, and some save and bury it, and at an early period in life may buy their freedom. This very week, a splendid funeral was made for a black woman who paid for her freedom, and has left behind her \$100,000, collected by her industry, and also an amiable and respectable character. From my chamber-window I look down upon a family of freed blacks, who are my laundresses. They sell admirable spruce beer, and I know not what else; and the daughter amuses herself, and the family, and the neighborhood, by singing with a sweet and powerful voice of great compass, and accompanies her singing by the guitar. All this I rejoice to see and hear, and delight to record in honor of the Spanish government. And I would hide my face for shame, that in

some of our republican states, a statute forbids manumission, even when the owner is disposed to grant, or the slave is prepared to purchase the blessing.

In another letter I may state something of the colonial government of the island, of its ecclesiastical establishment, and its revenues, civil and ecclesiastical. But these topics may be too dry, except in small doses. * * *

My time passes pleasantly at Matanzas. Several very respectable families contribute to my comfort. I dine, sup, call in an easy way,—and with some I walk—and with some I ride. My intercourse is not confined to countrymen—I gather information from all, and check and balance their accounts, and hope to get the truth. * * *

Some of the shops in Matanzas are quite brilliant—but I cannot shop for the want of a tongue; and the Catalans are complete Jews.

By the way, there is a considerable number of Catalans and Biscayans on the island: and they have little of the character we have generally ascribed without distinction to the Spanish. They arrive in poverty, begin in a shop of six or eight feet square; live on a biscuit, and rise by patience, industry, and economy, to wealth; and unlike the Yankees, never fail.

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LETTER XXV.

TO MISS A—— W—— A——.

MATANZAS, MARCH 21st, 1828.

If you are not tired of geography, I would say that I have obtained the loan of M. B. Huber's work, giving in fifty pages, a statistical view of Cuba, to the year 1825. It is a little confused, and with some evident mistakes; yet it is probably the

best authority extant, except perhaps Baron Humboldt's recent volume. But the Baron can give but the collection of others, as he spent but very little time on the island, and that, many years ago. This work gives the population in 1817, according to census, at 638,448; Whites 259,260, *Free* blacks and colored, 154,057; slaves, 225,131. You will be surprised to observe the number of free blacks and mulattoes. In this account the author is inconsistent with himself, making them in another place, only 58,885. But even this account, makes almost one tenth of the population freed blacks and colored, and more than *a quarter* of the blacks and colored on the island *free*. This is an important fact, and seems to indicate a mode in which slavery may be safely abolished. Make the earning of freedom easy and sure to the active and prudent. Men, then, in obtaining their liberty will form those habits which will render them good subjects, and capable of taking care of themselves. Never, I hope, will this island throw difficulties and barriers in the way of a respectable slave, resolved honestly to work his way to freedom. I deeply lament that freedom is made impracticable in one, if not more, of the states in our union by a public law. Let not the despotism of Spain, more relenting and merciful than men rejoicing in freedom, and in the sacred creed that all men are born free and equal, spread blushes over any part of our country. As my kind and excellent friend, and the friend of my family, Mr D., takes pleasure in statistics, perhaps it may gratify him that you read parts of the letter of yesterday and today in his hearing. I add for you and him, that a very exact census of the island is now taking, which, when the public shall obtain it, will be a valuable document. The population of the island is supposed at this moment to have risen to from 800,000 to 1,000,000 of souls.

This morning, according to an appointment with a respectable merchant, I went to visit the public schools. As Spanish countries in our hemisphere have been in a deplorable state of mental neglect, the mention of this subject will excite your sur-

prise. I learn that schools were first set up under the authority of the Cortes, six years ago, those liberals being sensible that knowledge and freedom, or general information, and limited monarchy, are yoke-fellows. We first entered a high school; (as we say) kept by subscription. There was a respectable teacher who speaks good English, and is a Spaniard, instructing 20 boys, from twelve to eighteen years of age. Latin, English, and Spanish, are taught in this school. They stood respectfully while we were present. From this apartment we went into a *free* school, supported as I understand, by the city, and to which, the children of the poor have access. In this and a contiguous room there were 150 children, who rose as we entered; and as I gazed down the double row of young Spaniards, preparing, I hope, to excel their fathers, my emotion was too great for utterance, and I stood speechless by the master. They learn reading, spelling, and arithmetic, and geography. Specimens of writing were shown to us, which would have done honor to any of our schools. They have paper prepared, I believe, by a stamp, not ruled with blue ink like ours, by means of which every stroke was accurate in leaning and length. As the schools keep fewer hours than ours, we thought it improper to take up their time; and with as benign a smile as my heart could imprint, and a wave of my hand, and with pleasure overflowing at my eyes, I gave them my parting salutation. How far my emotion may have been influenced by a thought of schools at home, at this moment visiting and reporting to the town, I know not. May the time soon come, when it shall be as strange a thing for a child in Cuba to be uneducated, as in the United States, or even in New England.

A gentleman of fortune, a native of the United States, but married to a Spanish lady, invited me to a morning call on two *literary ladies* in the New town, a branch of this city. Their names, it seems, are not wholly unknown to American fame—Mrs B. and Mrs W. After a pleasant ride in a volante, the

lining of which was curiously wrought with a needle, into grapevines with leaf and fruit, and urns of flowers, the figures raised by stuffing, we were set down at Mrs B's. cottage. It was neatly white-washed,—a table in the middle of the room with implements for writing, and her son of twelve years at his task of Latin and English, of French and Spanish. A piano stood in one corner, which she called a necessary of life, in a retired situation. A white curtain half exposed, half concealed a bed-room, and another table; and the poetess observed it was a pleasant retirement for writing. It was evident by the nicety of her dress and apartments, that the visit had been arranged between her and my guide. She is a florid, good looking woman. * * *

At the next cottage hard by, my friend exclaimed at the outer door, "How is Mrs W. today?" A voice from an inner apartment cried, "She will show herself," and immediately from behind the curtain the learned authoress, and elegant painter of flowers emerged. This lady is chiefly famous for a manuscript which she intended to have printed; but the selfish, calculating printers would not undertake it upon their own hook, nor upon hers without \$6,000, which she had not to give. The said manuscript has been to America and back again to Cuba with the fair author. It is said to contain paintings of flowers, native and exotic of this island, with an interspersion of descriptions and scraps of poetry. I suppose it is a dish which the Spaniards might call an olio,—a little of almost everything.

We returned to my friend's fine establishment; after which I called upon Mr and Mrs B. from Boston. * * *

This afternoon I have been perfectly delighted by the arrival of Mr G., my friend from Havana. He is immediately to return with me to Havana, with a delightful party, worth all my delay. The city and shipping of Havana are in perfect health. A long north wind has agitated the pool, and all danger is put to flight. Soon after our arrival at Havana, we are to go down

to the Leeward. * * * It is the most populous, the wealthiest, and handsomest part of the island, through which I am to pass, and in which I shall stay a few weeks. I hope not to forget the main object of my journey, the establishment of my health. In the uncertainties before me, I humbly commit myself to the divine keeping. The more I see of this curious and strange country, the more I am attached to my own.

LETTER XXVI.

TO MRS E—— A——.

MATANZAS, MARCH 22d, 1828.

ARE you tired of my minute account of Catholic ceremonies? If not, I have a little that is new, for they are continually varying the scene, that familiarity may not prevent effect.

Last evening I took the arm of one of my attentive American friends, (an amiable and respectable man, in excellent business, and connected with an important house in Havana,) and took an airing. We passed by accident towards the church, when the whole chime of bells struck up, in the most noisy and confused play and rapid strokes, as if resolved to be attended to. Coming in sight of the church, we perceived it was lighted, and that more than the usual number were collecting. We joined the rest and walked far down the area, so as to have a perfect view of what was passing. Many were on their knees before an exhibition of the crucifixion. The same figures as described in a former letter, were presented in a very different manner—Jesus, the Virgin, and two other women, one of them kneeling. They were on a stage in front of the side altar; the crucified was under a red velvet canopy; and the women, standing and kneeling, with fourteen large tapers burning before them, so arranged as to rise row above row, and reflect a strong light upon the awful scene. Ten or twelve feet in advance of these

were two very large tapers, fixed in candlesticks, twelve or fifteen feet high. These candlesticks were fixed in mahogany blocks on the floor. A few minutes before the entrance of the priests, two attendants in white frocks with a hasty step came in, and each took one of these lofty candlesticks with the taper burning, and stood by the door at which the priest was to enter; and as he entered, they moved with him to the scene of the crucifixion, and replaced them on their stand. The priest was dressed in a gorgeous mantle over his shoulders like a shawl, different from anything I had seen. He burned incense before the crucified, and threw upwards its fumes; and commenced a chant which was continued from the gallery with a few pretty good voices, and several admirable instruments exquisitely played. The chants were long, in the minor key throughout, and with the most touching tones. While they were chanting, the priest took a taper in his hand, and kneeled with his attendants, and looked with a fixed gaze at the crucifixion for, I should think, ten or twelve minutes. His head was immovable, and his eyes elevated and fixed on the crucified as if his last words, "It is finished," were still in his astonished ears. After the *beholding* was over, he read prayers with responses from the people, the purport of which was a supplication for the forgiveness of sins, "*through the blood of the everlasting covenant.*" The priest and the people performed this service with a quick correspondence; the response was pretty general and rapid, as if their part was familiar, and most had no book.

Thus I have given you the principal circumstances of this (shall I not say) *theatrical* representation of the crucifixion. As an exhibition I deny not that it was striking and affecting. But does it not seem something profane to act over the awful scenes of Calvary—to act over the dreadful tragedy, from which the sun veiled his beams; at which nature was in affright and disaster, rocks rending, the earth quaking, and the sacred veil of the temple parting asunder? And what is the warrant in scripture for this theatrical display? Certainly not in the sim-

ple command—"This do in remembrance of me,"—and I know not what can justify it. Possibly it may be said, that the justification is to be found in the good tendencies of the thing ;—that hearts so cold as ours need affecting exhibitions, to move them. We *are* too cold ; but I fear this is like the unhallowed fire of Nadab and Abihu, of man's kindling, and acting on the senses only, and not with that reflecting, gentle, holy influence, which touches and sanctifies the heart.

As I observed in a former letter, I am preparing to set out for H. after dinner, so that I shall leave you a rare sight, a few blank inches in this sheet. We know not what a day may bring forth—nor what sudden event of Providence may overcast or even terminate life. But we are in God's hands, and there I *love* to be. As yet, everything, I ought thankfully to acknowledge, seems conspiring to render my intended journey pleasant. Besides servants there are to be six American gentlemen of the party. Half of them have had public educations, and the rest are well informed and interesting companions. I, starting today, shall be *three* days on the road, which is a prudent division of the fatigue. It is a fine country through which we pass—and Havana is in an interesting attitude for a Protestant stranger, immediately after the greatest parade the city has ever seen, and before Easter.

Every day here my valuable circle of acquaintance spreads. An English gentlemen of high standing procured an introduction to me this morning ; expressed his regret that I was leaving the town, and his hope to see more of me at my return. * *

Give my kindest love to my colleague ; and entreat him to be kind to my people for my sake. I hope my third pastoral letter has been received and communicated ;—that all things go on well in the parish ;—that love and comfort reign in the parlor and kitchen ;—and that you all long to see me as much as I want to see you.

LETTER XXVII.

TO MRS E—— A——.

HARUO, MARCH, 1828.

IN company with Mr H. and Mr F. and a Spanish guide familiar with the way, we set out at four o'clock for St Cyrilo, the coffee estate of Mrs J., on our way to Havana. We travelled in sight of the St Juan two or three leagues; glanced an eye into the gardens of the Marquis of Padramano, as we passed in the rear of them, had a fine view of the Pan of Matanzas, of its bold spires, and of the notch in the mountains, occupied by the estate of Mr Lovio, and arrived in the little village of Lamocho, and stopped at a fine hotel. This village contains about thirty houses, and a pretty church, furnished with a priest, who serves a district of 2000 souls. A respectable looking man at the hotel informed us that there were prayers in the church every day, attended by four or five persons, and on the sabbath by a considerable collection from the district; and that they had two sermons in the year on Saints' Days, probably meaning at Christmas and Easter, and none but vocal music, unless they obtained it from Matanzas.

We passed on in the cool of the evening to St Cyrilo; the latter part of the way we had only a moonlight view of the country. And the whole distance from Matanzas was occupied as pasturage and farming land, with but here and there a plantation. The view of the mountains of San Juan was pretty, and the play of the waters of the latter, where the road passed on its margin, was beautiful, over a small fall of convex stone.

The entrance into the St Cyrilo estate is very tasteful. A broad and lofty gate, highly ornamented, was thrown open to us by the porter from the lodge, and we approached the mansion through an avenue of bamboo, forming a Gothic arch; continued by orange-trees, and the whole set with rose-trees in full bearing, and extending nearly a mile. We passed through

a very extensive siccaderos enclosed with a white picket fence, and a tank of water covered with palm, and were hospitably received at the mansion by the nephew and niece of the proprietor; and had nothing to regret but the absence of our accomplished friend, and that it was not in our power to look round more leisurely by daylight upon this fine estate.

Mr L. called us before daybreak to partake of a repast to suffice us till the more regular meal we were to take at Haruco, six or seven leagues on our way; and we started on our journey. From St Cyrilo to Haruco is a champaign country, with a distant view of hills. It has the appearance of having been formerly cultivated in plantations, but it is now chiefly in pasture. Aquacarte is a small village, with a church in bad condition, and two bells, hung on a pole near the ground. A Spaniard in the neighborhood, who entered into free conversation with one of our party, spoke slightly of the priest, of attending church, of confession, and of fees. I could not refrain from remarking to him, that I was afraid he was more attached to his money than to religion. He said, perhaps he was more attached to it than to religion, as it is in this country—but he understood that it was a different thing in the United States, where men judged for themselves what was right, and worshipped as they saw fit. I recommended to him to attend to religion as a serious and important matter; and under the form adopted by his country, till he should be better informed.

We arrived at Haruco to a late breakfast. It is a town situated on a rocky swell of land, containing several streets of houses, in general of mean appearance, a respectable church, a priest, and 2,400 inhabitants. At the entrance we saw a cockpit filled with people, and three or four taverns near by, too full of men and horses to admit of our hoping for accommodation if we stopped. Our guide led us from tavern to tavern without success, till we passed over the hill beyond the town, and stopped at a house near the little river. We saw people gathering to the town from different directions, and by

the lateness of the hour we judged for amusement, and not for church, for the cockfight, and not for prayers.

While breakfast was preparing, I endeavored to obtain rest and sleep. But my couch was fixed in an apartment devoted to so many objects, that I did not succeed. The cook was employed in my sight in the whole process of killing, scalding, picking, singeing, and cleaning the fowls, and performing in the same simple vessels whatever was further necessary to give us a fricassee with eggs and small chips of bacon fried together. Hens were clucking to their chickens round my bed, and two small dogs worrying the chickens, and fiercely pursued by the hens in turn. Horses were led through parlor and kitchen, and little preference of accommodation was allowed to men above the beasts. There was a narrow sideroom to which I hoped to find access; but that was occupied by the ladies of the family, and therefore denied to strangers.

During the slow preparations for breakfast, inquiries were made about the town, and readily answered, and it was evident, that the same prejudices prevailed here in regard to the priest, attending church, and confession, as had been expressed in other villages.

LETTER XXVIII.

TO MRS E——— A———.

GUANAMACOA, MARCH, 1828.

* * * AFTER settling a heavy bill at an indifferent tavern, the best we could find, with a guide to direct us, among *seventeen* maintained in this small place, we started on our way. It is truly melancholy to remark that in every village is found a commodious building devoted to the barbarous sport of cock-fighting; that these animals are often seen before their doors in such a trim as indicates their destination, stripped of a part of

their feathers, and so chafed with spirit about the neck and tail, as to give those parts the blood colored appearance of the natural comb of the bird. Two days of the week are considered holidays for this amusement, Sunday, and Monday; but the principal devotion to it is shown on Sunday, Monday being called but half-holiday.

On leaving Haruco we enter on a most enchanting country,—the country of palm trees and sugar cane, of hills and valleys, and beautiful mountains. The Escalara ridge of mountains borders the view southward, and occasionally we see the ocean to the northward. Water is not in this tract of country so rarely to be seen on the surface. The small streams are arrested and form lagunas, by dams of stone laid in mortar, and plastered. Innumerable small hills run up their cones, some between two and three hundred feet high, and generally are cultivated to their tops. The gorges between them are commonly filled with plantain; and the whole scene seems variegated like a lively painted chequer-board. The most remarkable sugar estates that we passed, were those of the Marquis of Cardenas, and Don Perez Uria. Under the broad mill shed of the latter, we took shelter from the intense sun, and drank water from his cool cistern.

We gathered from his intelligent manager, that the grinding is now entirely performed by steam; that an engine of twelve-horse power performed the work, which formerly with great fatigue had been accomplished by two mills, with ten oxen to carry each of them. That the engine, delivered in Havana, had cost \$8,000, and had been in successful operation four years; that an engineer had been employed to four estates, which reduced the expense; that the bagassa, (cane which has been through the mill,) is sufficient to carry the engine, and to boil the juice to sugar, and that no wood whatever is consumed in the operation; that the shed, which now covers the engine, was put up to make the experiment, and the mills continued in possession of the main building; that by employing steam in-

stead of oxen, two hundred feet of this vast building would be rendered needless; that the experiment by the steam engine had been so perfectly satisfactory, that the mills had stood four years in the condition, in which we saw them without use; that the proprietor of this estate, also owned another, where an engine was differently constructed, and required wood to complete the operation of grinding and boiling; that eleven hundred boxes of sugar were made in a year, on this estate.

So far as a simple statement of facts goes, and this, doubtless, is the best evidence in the world, it appears evident, that the introduction of steam engines into sugar estates, would be an immense saving of expense to the proprietor; and by the horizontal posture of the nuts in grinding, and the use of a hopper to feed them, the accidents are effectually prevented, which occur so frequently in mills constructed upon the old principle. And last, not least, the more expeditious grinding, by steam, very much abates the exhausting fatigue of the grinding season, and takes away the necessity of grinding in the night; which would prove a great saving of life and limb, and be as great a benefit to the master, as a mercy to the slaves.

The afternoon being hot, we stopped again at a public house, in which I at once observed greater neatness and order than I had usually seen in the taverns of this country. Occasionally, a female was seen through the small door opening into the back apartment, but none entered the public room. As I was mounting my horse, it was remarked to me that the innholder had twelve children, and that they were all together in the back apartment. I requested to be introduced to his family; he very readily assented and led the way. It was a delightful and affecting sight. A mother with an infant in her arms, was surrounded by eleven well dressed children, appearing like a regular flight of steps, silent, and in order, while one of the elder girls was reading aloud to the rest. "These" said the father, "these, Senor, are my children," while there was evidently in his eyes emotion, in which pride and affection seemed to

bear a pretty equal part. I inquired, "how many of them could read?" "All, all," was the reply, doubtless not expecting that I should apply the words to those, who were too young to have learned. Seeing so extraordinary an instance of domestic instruction and good management, I asked further if they were baptized? He replied with emphasis, "Yes, and each on the eighth day after birth." "Sir," said I, "you are a happy father, and may God make these children a blessing to you," and in passing out I gave them my benediction in the style of the country—a Dios; and I cannot tell the pleasure I felt in hearing them all murmur after me in the customary words, by which they meant to express their hearty good wishes,—“Go, Sir, in a good hour.” The father who had been informed that I was a Protestant clergyman, attended me out quite to my horse, and I left him, thinking his feelings truly enviable.

We had not gone far, before we saw a considerable number of persons returning from church, where a baptism had been administered. Some were on horses, and some on foot. On one horse I saw a woman mounted, with an infant on her lap, and a man, no doubt her husband, riding behind, with one arm affectionately thrown round her, to preserve her steady in the saddle, and guiding the horse with the other hand. The volante passed, and in it was the infant, which had been baptized, with the mother or nurse. Soon after came by one of the most efficient members of the police, *Domingo Armona*, with a part of his band, all mounted, with carbines slung to their backs. They moved rapidly by, so that we had only time to observe the muscular form and fierce visage of the leader, and the corresponding looks of the band. We had halted by a tavern, and as a half dozen persons were apprizing us, who was approaching, we could perceive the awe or terror with which they spoke of him. His services have inspired a salutary awe of the government. The moment disturbance begins, or alarm is felt, this efficient man is sent for, and with the flight of an eagle, is on the spot.

We arrived at Guanamacoa in the dusk of evening, and two of our friends being anxious to be on change early in the morning, passed on to Havana, and Mr C. and myself, wishing to see more of this considerable town, and to approach the metropolis by daylight, spent the night in this populous village.

Guanamacoa contains a population of 10,000 souls, a respectable church, narrow streets, handsome houses, and many thatched cottages of mean appearance. It is a place of considerable business, and may almost be considered as a suburb to Havana. The views from this town to Regla, are fine, and the face of the country cultivated as the garden of the city. A vast city stretches itself out before us; the chalky stone, of which the walls and houses are constructed, gives to the city a resplendent appearance, dazzling to the eye, and not relieved by the verdure of trees or gardens. We looked down upon Regla, which may be called the eastern suburb of Havana, and a populous town by itself, separated from the city by the beautiful bay, the favorite resort of the seamen of the harbor. Most of the lumber, which enters the bay of Havana, is landed at Regla, and all the molasses, that is received by land carriages, or drogers, is deposited here. That which comes by land, is emptied into large tanks. It was a matter of notoriety, that many of the pirates, who infested the neighboring coast, three or four years since, had a home in Regla. This town is adorned by a handsome church, and some fine houses, but its general appearance answers to its moral character, as the resort of the imprudent and idle.

LETTER XXIX.

TO MRS E—— A——.

HAVANA, MARCH 25th, 1828.

IN descending from Guanamacoa, we had a fine view of the high hills on the north of the city and bay, supposed to be im-

pregnably fortified. On that side of the bay, and below the barracks, is a little populous town, called Casa Blanca. The hill for a great extent is fortified, and at the western end a connexion is formed with the Moro, by a subterranean passage, that in the event of an attack, the strength of the hill might be imparted to the Moro, and of the Moro to the hill, as circumstances might require. The Moro terminates the interesting view of the high hills north of the city, as seen from the high ground between Guanamacoa, and Regla. We can only see, at such a distance, that it is a castle, with a handsome tower.

Nothing can exceed the beauty of the bay of Havana. It appeared like an inland lake, its connexion with the ocean being concealed from our view, as we approached it. It is capacious, circling round half the city, with good depth of water at its narrow entrance, and seventyfours navigate it fearlessly. A vast number of large ships lay along its extensive wharf on the city side, with their bows to the wharf, and their long bowsprits pointing to the city. Every imaginable species of water-craft was plying, or lying at anchor, at the skirts and in the centre of this magnificent harbor. We were fortunate in the day, the birthday of the king, as the vessels of war were dressed in their gayest attire. A seventyfour at anchor in a central part of the bay, looked magnificently; and we had the pleasure to see, among the flags of all nations, a conspicuous place assigned to the *stars and stripes*. The flags were so arranged as to delight, not more by their gorgeous colors, than by the tasteful and symmetrical arrangement of them.

Between Regla and the city, large boats are constantly plying, so that one is arriving as another is departing. Our baggage was transferred to one of them, and we embarked for Havana. We passed under the stern of an United States' ship of war, we understand the Erie, and wondered that in a friendly port she was not dressed in compliment to the king. We perceived, however, that the occasion was noticed throughout the bay, by Spanish vessels of war only.

We were soon in the city, and a black man in livery seized an article of our baggage, as a pledge that we would take his volante to convey us to lodgings; and through very narrow streets, everywhere crowded by foot-passengers and vehicles, with many stops to disentangle, and patient waiting now and then till the choked stream gave way, we arrived at the Hotel de Madrid. In the centre of this city,—a vast mass of stone and mortar, encircled by a high wall, and the wall protected by a broad ditch of a hundred feet in width, which can be filled with water at pleasure for the safeguard of the city,—it is impossible that a reflecting stranger should not be filled with deep interest. Every circumstance around him proclaims the importance of Havana. The turret and portholes of the excavated rock of the Moro, frowning over the narrow entrance of the harbor; the strong battery answering to it on the opposite point; the long range of cannon and barracks on the city side; the powerful fortifications that crest the opposite hill; all speak one language to the eye of the stranger, that Havana is the heart of Cuba, and must never be given up. It is evident, he perceives, that the city is worth all this care to preserve it. The bay, populous with vessels from the whole commercial world; the city a depot of mercantile and agricultural opulence; the immense extent of public buildings; the cathedral, churches, and convents; the Governor's palace, post office, and other public buildings, with the palaces of nobles and opulent gentlemen, some of which buildings cover squares; in short, a spot wholly occupied with buildings, except a very scanty portion devoted to lanes, for as to streets we can hardly allow that they have any, proclaim Havana within the walls, one of the richest and most important spots, for the number of its roods, on the face of the earth. And yet Havana within the walls, is less populous than Havana without.

Yet what is Havana now, to Havana in the distant prospect? The country makes the town. The population of the island is rapidly increasing. Every facility is given to the introduction

of foreign capital, and of foreign planters and merchants. The laws in this respect are highly liberal, and the practice of the government still more so. He who cannot buy, may take up land on trust ; and while reducing the forest to a fruitful field, he is not even charged with the rent. When he can pay rent, it is exacted ; and when he can buy the land, a fee simple is given him, and even creditors are not allowed to cramp his operations, or to eject him from his possessions by any sudden or distressing movement. What may not be expected as to the future magnificence of this city, when a soil so fertile, shall be more generally settled, and the rich productions of the surrounding country, shall pour a full tide into its bay and warehouses ? Havana and its sister cities, and the island, are commencing a glorious career. If they continue their connexion with the parent country, in most respects it is a beneficent one. Their taxes to church and state are not oppressive ; and protection is generally extended to persons and property. / Assassinations are somewhat frequent in the city, and are a reproach to the government ; but this is imputable in a great degree to an unfortunate law, which subjects to arrest and confinement every person who is a mere witness to a murder. The consequence is, that when an assassination is attempted, every witness flies from the spot, instead of coming to the relief of the assailed, or to the conviction of the murderer. It is devoutly to be hoped, that a law so fatal to the unfortunate, and so favorable to the flagitious, will be repealed.

Either the laws, or the administration, is often unfavorable in matters of property ; and the deepest purse is said often to determine the suit, if not the merits of the case. A case in the high court of Principe is a case in chancery, where delays and embarrassments are likely to be multiplied, so long as the litigants have fuel to spend on the flame. But in this country prudent men keep out of the law, and seldom lose property to any serious amount.

The time will probably come, when the island will become

independent, or attached to a government of greater energy. There appears no desire, for the present, of any change so serious. Native Spaniards do not desire it; foreigners desire it as little. Any change would be likely to bring heavier taxes at least, and probably greater impediments to commerce.

But if they should become independent, such is the extent and fertility of the soil, so rich are the productions of the island, so much greater is the attention to education than formerly, and so many the schools setting up, by public and private patronage, that they will have wealth, and knowledge, and population, sufficient to render themselves respectable in the family of nations.

LETTER XXX.

TO MRS E—— A——.

MARCH, 1828.

WHILE in the city, and under the conduct of highly intelligent friends, I took a hasty view of the most considerable objects, which attract the traveller. The most interesting spot in the city is the governor's square; or the square fronting his palace. It is an ornamental garden, neatly divided into small compartments by footwalks, and freely traversed in every direction by all that list; soldiers, however, watch that no violence is done to the plants. On the south side of the square stands the immense palace of the Captain General, a little city by itself. On the north side stands a beautiful arch of marble, serving as a gateway to lead to the barracks. A little farther east is the little elegant chapel recently dedicated by the Bishop to the memory of the first mass said on the island by Columbus. It has a front inclosure, and a beautiful gateway, the effect of which is injured by the more towering arch leading to the barracks. The beauty of the snow-white structure and fence is not improved by a pale green gate, and urns on the posts, sur-

mounted by pine apples painted a dark green. On a pillar in the inclosure in front of the church is a small statue, I know not to the memory of whom, and an inscription on the architrave of the church.

On this spot was recently standing the tree, (it is confidently said,) under which the Discoverer of the country said mass. It has been cut down to receive the chapel, and its wood distributed in precious relics. On the remaining side of the Governor's square is the Consulado of Commerce, an inconsiderable building, and private shops and houses.

It being a high holiday, I accepted an invitation to a ride in a volante on the Passao. No hired carriage is admitted to pass round in this gay and fashionable course; and the walk from the city would have been fatiguing. The Passao is about a mile in length, broad enough for carriages to pass each other at a safe distance, yet so near as for friends to give each other the passing salute, which is done by the ladies with a shake of the fan, and by the gentlemen with a wave of the hand. There are sidewalks and seats all along for persons on foot, and the whole course is set out with a great variety of beautiful trees. Five bands of music were stationed at favorable points in the course, and playing exquisitely on a great variety of instruments. At the upper end of the course was a small inclosure, and a handsome statue, I think of Charles the Third of Spain. Here the most powerful band of music was stationed, and as the volantes passed round, the horses were frightened or inspirited almost beyond the power of the drivers to keep them in order.

It was a lively and splendid exhibition, and an interesting ride. Mounted soldiers were stationed along the course, to preserve order, and to terminate disputes if any should arise. Each carriage kept its place; and marquis and count, gentleman and plebeian, if rich enough to keep his volante, figured in the animated and brilliant course. The curtain of the volante was let down, often exhibiting a single gentleman, oftener a gentleman and lady, and sometimes three persons, the whole passing round

and round, seeing and seen, and listening to the music, and exchanging salutations with one another and with friends on the sidewalks, till each carriage filed off at pleasure, and returned into the city through a different gate from that, by which they entered on the course.

The Captain General has appropriated a small portion of land, lying contiguous to the ancient barracks of the city, to be cultivated as his private garden. It was originally open to the visits of the people; but in consequence of some abuse of the privilege, the entrance has been shut against them, and guarded by a soldier. A privileged person proffered to conduct me to this secluded garden.

It is a pretty spot, adorned with flowers and shrubs, some culinary vegetables, a few fine busts and statues, a jet of water, a duck-pond twenty feet square, with a boat in it, and to complete this short hand description, a cockpit, for the Governor's private diversion and relief amidst the oppressive cares of state. Two or three persons were engaged in the pit, in the act of training a fierce chanticleer, whose spurs were masked, that he might not injure his adversary, who was held fast by the trainer, and darted at him or withdrawn from him, running round the pit, in such a manner as might in the highest degree provoke and animate the trained cadet. Thus we see, that this favorite sport of the island finds a cool retreat in the Governor's private garden, and the patronage of his excellency in hours of leisure from public business.

The pleasures of this morning walk were increased by a visit to the palace of Count Fernandino. It is an extensive building, the seat of his ancestors, which is undergoing a series of changes and repairs, in accomplishing which, the proprietor has already expended \$100,000. The halls are spacious and elegant, and a distinct suite is appropriated to his mother, to his countess, and himself. From the gallery of this superb mansion, you may look down into the stable on the horses feeding. It seems crowding things unlike, too closely together; but in this crowded city the inconvenience is not easily avoided. * * *

LETTER XXXI.

TO MRS E—— A——.

HAVANA, MARCH, 1828.

IN company with a distinguished Spaniard, to whom I am indebted for much information and civility, at nine o'clock, we attended in the cathedral church, and witnessed high mass performed in great splendor. The exterior of this vast building is not in perfect taste, and the Bishop, the liberal improver of everything around him, has commenced a change to something more simple and grand. He has already transformed and beautified the interior. The view was imposing and awful in a high degree. The lofty arching over head, the depth and spread of the central avenue to the principal altar, at this time veiled in black, the side avenues, only inferior to the central, and the tasteful painting of the whole, with the fine figures in the dome, representing Moses, the Prophets, and Evangelists, excite a strong emotion. The exquisite paintings here and there displayed with striking effect—a family scene, in which Abraham and Sarah were the principal figures, while an angel announced, “And Sarah shall have a son”—with the still more beautiful painting, on the opposite side, of Christ conversing with the woman of Samaria, while the apostles, at a distance, are seen looking on with wonder,—add to the interest. In front of the altar, and within the railing, is a beautiful flooring of mosaic, of various colored marble in curious checks, resembling a superb Turkey carpet. There are a number of side altars, but simplicity is the general character of the whole. On the left of the altar is a bust of Christopher Columbus, let into the wall, and his bones are preserved in a silver urn standing near the spot. Many figures in basso relievo, which my friend supposed to be the Fathers of the Church, appear on the circular wall behind the altar, and above the seats appropriated to the dignitaries of the church. Such was this magnificent cathe-

dral, as it appeared to me at my first glance of the eye round on its parts.

We stepped into the sacristy, my friend being on pleasant terms with some of the respectable ecclesiastics, and to one or two I was introduced ; to the chanter, in particular, in his dress for the day, whose powerful and sweet voice soon after resounded through the cathedral. In the sacristy, I observed a beautiful picture of "the man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." It was different from West's, and every other I have seen, in the whole cast of the countenance. This circumstance seems to show that there is no traditionary representation of the face of our blessed Lord, as some have supposed ; but that successive painters have only endeavored to combine whatever is reverend, and holy, and lovely, in their image of him. There is greater roundness and fullness of countenance, than in West's Jesus healing in the temple. Yet there is a divine gravity and sweetness in it. The chanter led us out of the sacristy, to see a little spot of earth on the eastern side of the building, set with a few small trees and flowers, where, he said, they were wont to take a little fresh air.

In the sacristy, there was a large number of priests and youthful attendants ; the latter pursuing their studies in the Jesuits' College, to prepare themselves for the priesthood ; and their ministry on these public occasions, serves to initiate them in their future duties. They, in general, had interesting and intelligent faces : but their dress, in brown gowns, with a short white frock over them, gives them a feminine appearance.

The chanter suddenly left us, at the signal for high mass. Two of the youths advanced, and took each a taper on a candlestick, eight or ten feet high, and conducted the dean, supported by two deacons, (as I understood them to be,) covered with very splendid mantles, to the altar. The usual ceremonial was gone through. Incense was burned, and a chant was sung, and played on the organ in a style of perfection I have never heard equalled. There was great power and equal sweetness ;

admirable timing and correspondence. "Gloria in excelsis" was performed in great grandeur. In the course of the long service, there was a variety of ceremonies solemnly and gracefully performed. As there were so many sustaining a part, and it is so important that there should be no omission, and nothing out of time and place, they have an experienced priest, whose office it is to prompt when it is needed, so as to secure perfect order. One part of the ceremonial was a procession round the cathedral. A young man, perhaps eighteen years old, carried a veiled crucifix on a staff, attended by others with different instruments in their hands, the names of which I have not ascertained. They were followed by perhaps forty or fifty priests, chanting as they went, and occasionally stopping, probably to invite the adoration of those they passed. They passed near where I was standing with my Spanish friend, a Catholic, but also a liberal man. He a little inclined his body, but did not kneel.

After the ceremonial of high mass was over, the scriptures were brought to one of the deacons, and he approached the dean, and bent to receive his benediction, to go and read the Gospel to the people. He laid his hand upon him with a brief form of words, and he repaired to the pulpit and read, after solemnly announcing it, a portion from the Gospel of Luke, in Latin, a language which the people do not understand. This done, he returned to the priest who sent him with his benediction to read, and resigned him the book, which, in token of reverence he kissed and closed.

In the afternoon, the same obliging friend took me in his volante to see the Campos Santos, the Catholic burial ground, one of the important improvements accomplished by the public spirited and liberal Bishop, in the suburbs of the city. It had been the immemorial practice of the city to bury in the vaults of their churches; and these Golgothas were filled with human dust and bones, and the health of the city exceedingly exposed. To remedy this serious evil, the Bishop formed the

beautiful cemetery in the suburbs, which we went out to see. It is a square enclosure, containing perhaps four or five acres. It is enclosed by a beautiful wall, plastered as smooth as the pavements of houses in this country, many of them not surpassed, for smoothness and hardness, by marble. At each corner and on two of the sides, were erected shafts in a pyramidal form, ten or fifteen feet high, which give a monumental air to the enclosure. These walls and shafts are painted in pannel work. At the entrance is a neat building, the central part of which is intended for the last rites performed over the dead as they pass to the grave; and at one end of the building the priest lives, who performs these rites, and in the other the sexton. The yard is traversed by a pavement of flat stones, in two directions, dividing the square into four equal parts. One of these paved walks leads from the entrance to the farther side, where has been erected a small beautiful chapel, in which the rites are performed in greater style, for such as are able and willing to contribute a handsome sum to charitable uses. Near this chapel for the rich and noble, are stones purporting to be the sepulchres of Governors, Bishops, distinguished Civilians, and distinguished Ecclesiastics. In this neighborhood we found on stones the names of many of the most distinguished families of the country.

Just as we arrived, we found the service for the dead performing over the body of a priest. He lay dressed, so far as I could see by a hasty glance, in the usual habit of a living man. When the service was over, which consisted in part of chanting, the attendants took up the corpse in a shallow coffin, without any covering on the upper part, and moved off with a quick step to the grave. The head of the corpse, reposing on its pillow, was visible all the way, and was kept in constant motion to the right and left by the hasty walk of the porters. Several graves in the yard I saw already dug, to be in readiness for those that might need them.

The Bishop had some of the strongest prejudices of the

people to combat, in building this new cemetery. Fortunately, the first death, after the yard was in readiness, was that of a Spanish noble. The friends besought the Bishop that he might be buried in the church; but he was inflexible, and would grant him Christian burial no where but in the Campos Santos. People of less standing, therefore, followed the example, and the difficulty is gone by. * * *

It required great moral courage in the Bishop of Havana to achieve this important change in the burial of the dead. The long cherished custom of burying under the sacred walls of the church, where the most solemn rites of religion are daily performed, and the prayers of the devout are ascending, and ascending *for the dead*, had naturally entwined itself round the hearts of Catholics, and could not be rent away without violence to their strongest prejudices. But the health of the city required it, and the Bishop with great wisdom and resolution took his measures, and has achieved a beneficent change, which will endear his memory to posterity. It is the Bishop's measure; yet he was politic in associating the name of the Captain General, Someruelos, with his own, that the union of civil and ecclesiastical authority might render success the more certain.

* * *

From this interesting spot, which might suggest profitable hints for the arrangement of Protestant burial grounds, we passed a few rods, to the Insane Hospital, which has been just completed on an extensive and beautiful scale, but is not yet occupied by its unfortunate tenants. It has a handsome front building, through which you pass into a spacious court, the four sides of which are divided into distinct rooms or large cells, for the separate accommodation of the lunatics.

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LETTER XXXII.

TO MRS E ——— A ———.

HAVANA, MARCH, 1823.

FROM the insane hospital we repaired to another benevolent institution in the neighborhood, the Lazaretto for lepers, a class of persons scarcely less pitiable than those who have been deprived of reason ; often much more sensible of their misery, oppressed with a disease usually incurable, infectious also, and therefore requiring exclusion from the ordinary consolations of society. This benevolent institution was originally upon a large scale, and capable of accommodating many inmates, which seems to show that the disease is prevalent in this country. The institution is now evidently in considerable neglect. The gate was open, and negroes were idling around it, some or all of whom may have belonged within. It is a large open court or square, inclosed with a row of huts, some of them in bad repair. In the centre is a large building, which possibly may be the common kitchen and store-room. Some parts of the square were inhabited, and the rest were shut up. A considerable number of lepers, however, were to be seen, some exceedingly disfigured in their faces, but the larger number affected in their extremities, their feet and hands. Some had no fingers above the middle joint. An air of woe was upon the face of all ;—a sort of desperation seemed to characterize the look and movement of a few. From one or two of the apartments came the sounds of the guitar and voice, implying the experience of better days, and an endeavor to recall in their seclusion the tones of gladness and joy. When new benevolent institutions are attracting peculiar attention, it will sometimes happen that those of longer standing fall into comparative decay and neglect. But the compassionate of this city will but need a short walk within the walls of this lazaretto, to awaken an active sympathy.

Our next visit presented a delightful contrast to our walks in

places devoted to the dead, the lunatic, and the leprous. It was in the magnificent institution called Casa de Beneficiencia, or *the house of mercy*. It is appropriated to the subsistence and education of orphans and friendless children. In the first instance, females only were admitted ; but with a noble accession to its funds, boys also now share the benefit. It was commenced by the Governor, La Casas, in 1795. * *

A noble accession to its funds has been made by ———, in the gift of lands in the partido of ———, estimated at \$200,000. The appearance of the buildings is very fine, extending several hundred feet on the main street, and as many on another street, the whole enclosing a spacious court, with a living brook, probably diverted from the city canal, ranging through the premises, and diffusing health and cleanliness among the numerous children and youths of the establishment. We entered through the chapel, a neat building, and more than sufficient for the accommodation of the house of mercy. We ranged through the lofty and spacious halls on the lower and upper story, under the conduct of the respectable gentleman, who presides over the institution; and visited the apartments of those who were slightly ill with a cold, and of those who were more seriously ill. It was a holiday, or the hour was that of amusement, and we saw the children and young ladies in small groups, or sitting at their large windows, grated in the fashion of Spanish houses, all neatly dressed, and some tastefully. Some were amusing themselves with reading, and some with work, and the little girls were innocently sporting from hall to hall.

Having passed over the apartments appropriated to the females, their school-rooms, their eating-rooms, their immense hall in which their cots are arranged for the night, after the manner of the Moravians, but decently removed to a private room for the day, we entered on a distinct suite of rooms for the accommodation of the boys, in most respects similar to the other.

A useful education is given in this institution to two hundred females, and forty boys, and to all except ten, at the expense of the institution. The ornamental kinds of needlework are taught, as well as the more useful, and even music. In the boys' apartment we found the Lancasterian plan adopted; the walls were hung with the usual tablets, and the benches with slates. It is remarkable that females once entered into this establishment remain as long as they please, or till they are married; if married from the house, they are portioned as daughters of the family, each bride receiving a dowry of \$500. Several of the young ladies we saw in friendly conversation with young gentlemen, their brothers possibly, and possibly friends entertaining for them still tenderer sentiments.

We returned to the city through the Montserrat gate, and passed, in the street next to the southern wall, to see the fashionable city walk. * * * * *

We left the volante, and entered on the promenade, meeting gentlemen and ladies at every step, and many occupying the seats, which are constructed of the same material as the smooth and level walk.

We were again taken up by the volante, and set down by the Governor's square, and ranged over the garden, beautiful by moonlight. We took a transient view of the new chapel, and passed to the landing-place of drogers, and ranged along by the wharf neatly covered with plank, and closely stowed with ships, the bowsprits of which all ranged over the wharf, to occupy the less room in this crowded harbor. We passed in front of the building soon to be occupied as the more commodious custom-house of this grand depot, and returned to my lodgings.

Tomorrow I leave Havana on a journey into the country.

LETTER XXXIII.

TO MRS E—— A——.

MARCH 27th, 1823.

WITH a friend, according to a previous arrangement, I started at 5 o'clock for St Antonio at the leeward. Our horses were without the walls, and we passed on foot a very little after day-break to the western gateway which we found thronged with loaded mules. Hundreds, probably thousands, moving heavily under their burdens, were pressing for a chance to enter, and raising a suffocating dust. They were tied together in long rows, each row under the care of a driver. My well informed friend remarked that from ten to fifteen thousand enter the city daily.

We mounted our horses, with our baggage in the seroon of a servant, and passed through the suburbs of Havana. The porch is larger than the house, and the environs than the populous city. We travelled several miles through compactly built streets, the shops at this early hour open, and the market men and women crying their goods, and chaffering from shop to shop. It was amusing to observe in the suburbs what I have observed in Matanzas and the villages, the taste of the Spaniard for ornamental painting. On the fronts of shops and houses, and on plastered walls by the wayside, you continually see painted, birds, and beasts, and creeping things, men and women in their various vocations and amusements, and some things and some images, not strictly forbidden by the letter of the commandment, being like nothing *in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth.*

The first part of the distance to St Jago had the appearance of extensive gardens for the furnishing the great city with vegetables. Plantations were rare. The roads were cut down by much travel. We passed a handsome stone bridge. The face of the country, however, is not very interesting, and there is little appearance of country seats, to which the opulent of the

city might often repair for the sweets of retirement and fresh air. Rich soil, hill and valley, and various irregularities of site and prospect, render the country near Havana well adapted to such buildings, avenues, and gardens as embellish the environs of Boston. That they have not been improved, may, perhaps, be imputed to the fact that many of the wealthy have plantations in the country, to which with a little more travel, they can repair, and by their visits answer the double purpose of business and pleasure. * * *

St Jago is a considerable village, with the usual appendages of a church and priest. * * *

St Antonio is a village of 3000 inhabitants, and is a watering place of considerable resort. * * *

About four leagues from Havana commences a beautiful level country, generally of red soil, extending to the south coast, and thence nearly to cape San Antonio, westerly, and for a hundred leagues easterly. At the village of San Antonio, — leagues from Havana, commences the very garden of the island. Plantations of coffee, beautifully laid out and neatly cultivated, are almost continuous, and the eye of the traveller is constantly delighted with the finest specimens of agriculture. The present depression of this staple product, has induced some negligence here and there. But the pride of the planters, and the easy circumstances, in which they have been placed by better crops, and better prices in former years, and the hope of better times arising from the change of some coffee estates into sugar in this island, from a considerable diminution of the culture in the Brazils, and from the civil wars of Java, induce the planters generally to cultivate their estates with undiminished industry and neatness.

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LETTER XXXIV.

TO MRS E—— A——.

EMPRESSA, APRIL 1st, 1828.

THIS morning I left Buena Esperanza with —— and lady, for St Marks. We had a delightful ride to the house of his cousin, —— . Almost the entire distance is occupied with coffee plantations, in general in great neatness, with shorn lime hedges, and avenues of palm, and the finest fruits of the island. To this neat and fine appearance, one plantation, that we passed, presented a perfect contrast. The soil was good; there was a luxuriant lime hedge, but no pruning; in short, it was a plantation running wild. I inquired the reason of it, and was informed, that the proprietor had given himself up to intemperance, and the negroes did and omitted what they pleased.

Among the most distinguished estates, that we saw in this morning's ride, was that of the Captain of the Partido, and Mr Freer's. We turned from the public road into the great avenue, and travelled a mile in it to another public road, and passed a very tasteful arrangement of the mansion and other buildings at an equal distance from the two roads. We then entered on a very rocky soil; yet, even where there was scarcely any soil to be seen, the usual number of coffee-trees were stuck in among the rocks. These trees when first set out, had flourished and borne plentifully; but they appear to have exhausted the power of the little soil they could find, and it is difficult to manure with effect.

We arrived at the Empressa at an early hour to breakfast, and just as the sun was becoming intense. The island at this place is quite narrow being six leagues from Mariel, and three from the south shore. They speak of Mariel as a fine bay and harbor. It would be another Matanzas, if the immense capitalists of Havana did not exert a steady influence to prevent it. The estates to the leeward have petitioned that it may be a

port of entry. But it has been denied them, and their produce at an immense expense must go to Havana by land carriage or drogers. This is a very good thing, perhaps, for the merchants, but a very great diminution of the value of distant estates; and last, not least in the consideration of an American, a serious misfortune to young and healthy seamen, who, in such numbers every year find a grave in Havana.

When it is seen how fatal as well as fair is the bay of Havana, not to Americans only, but to the seamen of all nations, Spaniards not excepted; not merely in the heat of summer, but at every season of the year, when for any length of time the north wind fails to stir the stagnant pool, a remedy if *practicable*, ought to be applied. A remedy *is* thought practicable. It would be some relief to open ports of entry into safer bays, and thus divert a part of the navigation which crowds this harbor, to other parts. Havana, however, would still be frequented. Merchants will send vessels to the port without calculating the risks of the seamen, and seamen, notoriously improvident, will continue to sail into the jaws of death. There was something of truth couched under the uncouth hyperbole of the black prince Christophe—that “*Hang up a bag of coffee in the mouth of —, and Americans will be found to go after it.*” Let, then, the friends of humanity concert some measure which may cast healing into the waters.

It is not quixotism to say, that it may be done; and at an expense not very considerable. It is generally, for anything I know, universally, agreed, that the fever in the bay is in consequence of the stagnation of its waters. The bay is landlocked and entered by a narrow strait, and hidden by the Moro, and the high and fortified hill on its northern side, from the salutary influences of the trade wind. Thus sheltered, nothing in its present state, but a violent norther, can stir the pool. The tide is almost nothing, and the regular winds do not act upon it.

At the eastern end of this northern hill, the ground is low, and

would easily admit of a canal, which should let into the bay the current from the east, with the impulse of the trade wind diffusing in its course through the bay, motion and health. It is not easy to see any very serious objection to the experiment. The distance is not great. It lies through very practicable ground. And if in its course it should cut into the rock, which is every where the base of the island, so much the better, as it would place the current the more perfectly within control, a rock easily broken, while it is sufficient to resist the tide.

If by such means the end may be accomplished, it will be consulting the interests of the city, as well as of the seamen, who crowd this port, to do it. The fever catches from the bay to the city. It lies level with its margin, and it is not surprising that the miasma should creep from its slimy bed into the dirty lanes and narrow streets, (none are wide,) the humbler hovels, and even the sumptuous palaces of this great mass of stone and mortar. The men, who own millions within the walls are concerned surely in proportion to their property, to favor any scheme which promises relief from this calamity. If in their high and spacious apartments and open courts they have little apprehensions of fever, acclimated also as they are, it is worth a portion of their wealth, that fresher air should fan them, and that they be relieved from the painful consciousness, that the angel of death is stalking through the streets, and ravaging over the bay.

Other interests, besides that of health, might be consulted by this measure. It would tend to make Havana what it desires to be, a vast and still increasing emporium of the island. This is important to the island while in its present critical political situation, menaced by neighbors, and not very powerfully defended by the mother country. The force of the island is concentrated in the Moro and Cabana. And so powerful are their fortresses here, that they are almost fearless of all foreign powers. The opulent are well pleased to hold their capital and real estate under the protection of the guns of the Moro

and Cabana. Whatever tends to the health of the city and bay, tends to perpetuate the commercial prosperity of Havana, and to extend to still wider limits its suburbs.

The revolutionary spirit pervading other Spanish colonies, so called by Spain—by themselves called independent states—may kindle in this island. If the king or his ministers, deprived of the revenue, which in freighted galleons used to pour into his treasury from Mexico and the South, should impose burdens on this more faithful, and perhaps, more judicious colony, too great to be endured, it may seek relief by independence, or attachment to some more discreet foreign power. If independent, it would not be inconsiderable among the nations. The extent and fertility of the island, and its rapidly increasing population, strong by the predominance of the free, with a diffusion of hardy Monteros over the whole island, living in simple habits, every one with his horse, and his long sword by his side, make this a different island from others in its neighborhood, and entitle its individual interests to be consulted either as a colony, or as an independent state. In the event of change, the best security for Havana to remain what it is, will be to heal its waters.

It is devoutly to be hoped the experiment will be made. Millions have been expended in fortifying the bay and city against hostile foreigners. Let a few thousands be expended in keeping out *the pestilence walking in darkness and the destruction wasting at noonday*.

On Mr William D'W.'s estate there is a sumidero forty feet deep, and water in it which never fails; and many caves in this neighborhood which communicate with each other. I find caves wherever I go; it is a remarkable characteristic of the island. It is probable enough that they pervade the island, and that it is a honey-comb. To this circumstance may it not be imputed, that the island has been exempted from the calamity of earthquakes, with which the neighboring continent has been so often visited?

About sixteen miles from Mr D'W.'s is the village of Gaun-

ajoy, containing about 7,000 souls, and a church and priest, who is honorably employing his time in instructing a school. He boards as well as instructs his pupils, and receives twenty five dollars per month for each pupil. How dignified appears the minister of Christ, who devotes his leisure hours, (many, where two sermons a week are not required of him, as among protestant ministers,) in rearing the youth of his flock in useful learning. If the priest of each parish would do the same, what reproachful examples of idleness, gambling, and cock-fighting would at once disappear, and the moral "desert blossom as the rose." If the noble Bishop of Havana, who has done so many things which will embalm his name to a hundred generations, should devise a method by which his clergy should be so employed, a richer odor would accrue to his name than from his other magnificent acts. Soon an enlightened population would spring up in every village. The rich would have less occasion to send their sons abroad for education. The Monteros would acquire intellectual vigor in proportion to their physical; and the island would rise into its higher destinies. It were devoutly to be wished, that he were but forty years old, instead of threescore and ten. Long may he live, and retain the present vigor of his mind, and a heart as large as the sea.

Besides the school kept by the padre, there are two others in this populous village. There are twelve, perhaps more, in Havana. They are increasing, I believe, through the country, and every example will be followed by many others.

My friends conducted me to the beautiful estate of Senor H. and we remained a few hours, and dined with this accomplished and opulent Spaniard. His lady, with a train of twenty horses, to transport servants, baggage, and things essential, was gone to the watering-place of San Diego. The husband declined the excursion, thinking it pleasanter to remain in the scene of beauty and convenience which he has spread around him. He seems well to understand the art of living. He

would like a residence in the United States, but could not bear the cold. A dozen ounces would not be sufficient to draw him abroad into the hot suns of the island. A little of this nice economy judiciously practised, would save some on this island from the stroke of the sun, and preserve many more in good health; and deserves the serious consideration of those in whose *native* country the mercury, in the course of the year, traverses from zero to one hundred degrees upwards.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO MRS E—— A——.

LA RECOMPENSA, ST MARKS, APRIL 5th, 1828.

WE arrived at Dr M.'s at dusk, (April 1st,) and were received with the kindest hospitality. I was unwell at my arrival, and ready to impute my illness to the extreme heat of the day, and a degree of exposure to it. I went early to bed, and in the morning was no better. My old cough waked up with violence; a band of iron was strained round my head; a feverish state of the pulse was perceptible; my loss of appetite was evident, and my strength was considerably prostrated, and I was apprehensive of some unpleasant change. It was a kind ordination in Providence, that at such a moment I fell into the hands, and under the hospitable roof, of an accomplished physician, and, as he has proved, a very kind friend. As the change had taken place from my ordinary state of health in a dozen hours, I was led to review the circumstances of the day minutely, and detailed them to the Doctor. To some of them, a degree of exposure to sun, and a walk in an irrigated garden, he gave some weight, but pronounced it the influenza, at this time, with more mildness than usual prevailing in the neighborhood. With his judicious treatment, on the third day I was essentially better; my cough, however, has only abated, and not subsided; my appetite is returned, and my strength is returning.

My course is arrested in this beautiful district, the wide garden of the island, by a check of my health, and lest I should not have opportunity to advance further, I have collected such information of interest as I could from a gentleman whose professional duties have rendered him familiar with an extensive neighborhood.

The beautiful spot of country around me, is the *Hacienda* of St Marks. A *Hacienda* is a circle of land, granted by the king to a family, which cannot be sold in fee simple without an order, but may be leased perpetually; and this is done at from \$25 to \$75 for 33 acres per annum, the land being good. This *Hacienda* is about six miles in diameter. The lessee proceeds to make improvements on his land; clears off the wood; plants his coffee trees; sets his avenues. He again may sell his lease to a second person; but he charges in the sale of the lease from \$12 to \$90 per acre, according to the improvements he has made.

Real Lengua is land sold by the king in fee simple; for which he receives about \$20 per acre. As the island is cut up into circles, all the parings of the circles belong to the king; so that he seems to be everybody's neighbor.

There is a liberty which the king, as the grand tobaccoist of the island, takes, which would not suit the republican nerves of our countrymen. He is anxious to encourage the culture of tobacco, especially that of the finest quality, some of which sells as high as 125 to 130 cents per pound. This can be grown only on particular patches of soil, alluvial soil, (I believe,) it generally is. Some are more skilful in discovering the patches adapted to this precious culture than others. Any man has a right to pass into his neighbor's field, of which he takes a fee simple, and drive his stakes to mark out a tobacco patch, called a *bega*, to indicate the peculiarity of the title, by which he claims it; and for a reasonable price, the proprietor must give up the ground peaceably, or yield it to force. A string of these little plantations, little wheels belonging to some man, within

great wheels belonging to other men, may be seen in different parts of the island. With a very little capital, and other aid, a man may take up his bega; and a speculating capitalist often buys a number of them scattered through a neighborhood.

The mountains of San Salvador are a bold feature in the prospect of this part of the island. From the centre of the Hacienda of St Marks they are fifteen miles distant, and are about eight leagues long and six broad; and about one third of this hilly country is in a state of cultivation, yielding in different parts sugar, cocoa, indigo, corn, rice; three acres will yield twentyfive arobes. The violent rains of summer are injurious to the land, washing the soil in their course into the valleys.

When the French fled from St Domingo, then in the hands of the negroes, many of them resorted to these mountains, as resembling the spots in that island which they had cultivated in coffee, and with what they had rescued from the wreck of their fortunes, they commenced coffee estates on the sides of the mountains, thinking that mountain air was necessary to the culture of coffee. They very generally lost their property in the experiment, as the rains soon washed the soil from their trees, leaving the roots above ground. It was on table land in St Domingo that they planted, where they were not liable to the same misfortune. These French planters were driven from the island, while the Cortes were in power; but returned to their possessions when the ancient regime was restored. They, however, are in circumstances of depression.

Twenty miles east of San Salvador, from sea to sea, the country is highly cultivated in coffee and sugar. It is generally the very best land, and very little of it in a forest state. There are valuable portreros, or pastures, inclosed for hogs and cattle. They are very effectually fenced by pinon hedges, aloes hedges, and sometimes by wattled pickets. They are weeded with almost the same care as their coffee plantations, are adorned by scattering palms and other ornamental trees, and in some of them you may see a small dense grove cut into arches, and

overgrown with vines, forming an impenetrable shade for the animals, while the wind can circulate in any direction. These portreros are valuable estates, easily managed without much attention by the proprietor. To every plantation at least a small one is attached, to raise their meats, and feed their horses and mules. Larger ones are leased to Monteros; one near me yields a rent of \$5000 per annum, and another, of 165 acres, rents for \$1000.

In leasing a portrero, the pasture and stock are both included. The stock is numbered and estimated, and must be returned in the same condition as that in which it is taken. It is commonly profitable business, which a man of good judgment and character can undertake with a small capital. Meats on the island usually sell at 18 3-4 cents per pound; and a great variety and quantity appear on their tables.

Swine are raised on the island with great ease, especially in connexion with a plantation. The immense quantity of plantain raised among the coffee, and the superabundance of the mango fruit, which bends down the boughs of that large and beautiful tree, rows of which shade the extensive avenues of the plantation, to say nothing of smaller matters, afford a rich, a delicious, and fattening food for swine, almost inexhaustible. Corn also, in two, sometimes three, crops in a year, comes in to fatten the animals for the market.

Of this branch of revenue the negroes come in for a share, and there is scarcely a male or female adult slave, that has not his hog. Yet they are always in demand, and sell at a high price, from \$10 to \$50.

From the mountains of San Salvador S. W. to Cape Antonio is the tobacco country. It is here that the finest in the world is raised. It is not raised in great quantities, chiefly because the occupants are idle. This district of country is the refuge of many persons of questionable character. The administration of justice is very lax. Stealing, robbery, *piracy*, when they dare, contraband trade with the Mexicans, gambling, and every

species of crime boldly stalk about this part of the island, and render it an unpleasant and even dangerous residence for better men. A further reason for a very imperfect cultivation of this fruitful region is its insalubrity. It is watered by many streams, and in the wet season intermittent fever is very prevalent. Cultivation, however, is increasing. Since coffee has been depressed in price, planters have sent small lots of hands to cultivate begas, or tobacco patches; and have found it profitable. As the importation of the article has been recently prohibited, and the consumption of the island is immense, of Havana alone, it is confidently said, \$10,000 per day, to say nothing of the export, it must be profitable. There is some uncertainty about the crop, it being a plant of great delicacy, and its excellency and quantity depending much on the nice adjustment of rain to its wants. But, though an article of luxury, it has come to be considered an article of necessity, and the free negro appropriates a bit of his wages to increase the cloud of smoke that rises from the city and country; and with every uncertainty of season, the planter may safely go into the culture.

The tobacco planter occupies his ground the first part of the season with corn, or potatoes, or yams, to provide food for his laborers, and to put his land into a good condition. Then in September, when the rains have swelled the rivers above their banks, and have left a fine alluvial deposit on the surface, they plant the tobacco. That extraordinary tobacco which brings the enormous price already mentioned, is a few leaves only of a plant; the residue of the plant is ordinary. The very best tobacco comes from a spot called San Juan y Martinez.

LETTER XXXV.

TO MRS E—— A——.

LA RECOMPENSA, ST MARKS, APRIL, 1828.

It was mentioned in my last that the district of country S. W. of the mountains of San Salvador, was insalubrious. A benignant Providence seems always to place the antidote by the side of the poison. Springs of an extraordinary character are found on the borders of this unhealthy district ; I speak of the waters of San Diego. They lie 35 leagues southwesterly from Havana, and are the most celebrated of the many springs on the island, containing sulphuretted hydrogen gas in greater proportion than any waters hitherto known in the world. * *

These springs are frequented in the months of February, March, and April. There are about 350 persons on the ground at once. One hundred invalid soldiers are usually here, in miserable accommodations, for the benefit of the bath. The opulent are almost as wretchedly disposed of, and pay roundly for the sheds they occupy. There are about thirty *ranchos* leased to the strangers for thirty dollars per month each. These are huts of the slightest structure, with roof and sides of palm, and one or two partitions, occupied nine months of the year by swine, and the rest by ladies and gentlemen. So that those insects which banquet on swine three quarters of the year, have more delicate feasting in the watering season. It is with difficulty that servants can keep out the old tenants, while the *ranchos* are in possession of the new. But even the quadruped invaders of their miserable conveniences are less annoying than the biped ; for thieves are perpetually on the watch to purloin horse and mule, and every tangible article of value, that has not a sentinel placed over it.

There are a few houses at the springs a little better constructed, of mud walls ; yet for these, rude as they are, 119 dollars are charged for thirty or forty days, and they are rented

two or three times in the season. That sick men and women, allured by the hope of leaving all their maladies in the flood, should resort to these waters, is not surprising. But that persons in health should leave every earthly convenience at home to be devoured by vermin, swindled by gamesters, and stripped by thieves, at San Diego, can only be accounted for on that restless principle in mankind which prefers a change to evil rather than uniformity in good.

The time will come when the country southwest of San Salvador will be better cultivated, and its population assume a more regular character. It is generally laid out in haciendas, or land subject to perpetual rent. Already immense droves of cattle and swine issue from its porteros. Its select spots on the banks of rivers are more and more taken up for tobacco. The check given to coffee will prove a spur to this species of culture ; and many who have been almost ruined by rains washing their coffee estates on the sides of mountains, may repair their fortunes by following their soil to where it is deposited on the banks of the rivers, and cultivating on it the fascinating weed for which master and slave, and in this country, I might almost say, ladies and gentlemen, are equally eager.

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In speaking of the country west of Havana, it is judged that there are about six coffee estates to one sugar plantation. The quantity of land necessary for a sugar estate is vastly greater than what is necessary for a coffee plantation. Sugar is most cultivated near the port of Mariel ; coffee, in a circle round St Marks. Black soil is best for sugar ; red will answer for it, but is sooner exhausted by crops.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO G—— B——, Esq.

LA RECOMPENSA, ST MARKS, APRIL, 1828.

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THE largest coffee estate on the island of which I have heard consists of a million of trees ; the next in size, it is said, but the information can hardly be supposed to be very exact, is the Angenora, (or Argenora,) consisting of 750,000 trees, and 450 slaves. As this vast estate is conducted on principles somewhat original, some might take upon them to say, eccentric, and yet with excellent success ; and as many of the expensive arrangements have a striking character of humanity, while also they result in excellent discipline, several of my friends acquainted with the proprietor, attended me to see it. Fortunately, the planter, who is also a merchant, was on the estate, and as communicative as the inquisitive could desire. A concise, yet detailed account, may furnish hints to the enterprising and humane.

For his *batey*, or extensive square of buildings, he selected a rude spot of hill and valley, surcharged with rocks. This is approached by a broad and superb avenue, adorned in the usual manner, except that at the foot of the hill, on an elevated pedestal stands his sylvan deity, the Goddess of Silence, furnishing the name and emblem of the bachelor's estate. It is a fine marble statue in Roman costume, indicating by sign what she suffers not to pass her lips.

His principal building occupies the crown of the hill, and is 309 feet long, and 69 broad ; of the latter, thirtytwo feet are piazza, and on the north side of the building it is glazed, that the health and comfort of himself and negroes may in a moment be consulted by letting down or suspending the side of the piazza. A cold norther was blowing, and the negroes very comfortably picking coffee behind the glass.

In the first apartment of this extensive building is a mill to

grind the corn of the plantation, going by ox power, the oxen below and the stones above. The corn is rapidly shelled by a simple machine turned by a crank. The next apartments are store rooms for coffee in the cherry, competent to hold 20,000 barrels. In the centre of this building is the peeling mill, terminating in a cupola. Near by was a beautiful mill of stone, ready to be put down, hard as granite, white as chalk, nicely jointed and bevilled by his black masons, which he expects will never need alterations or repair.

It is a maxim with the proprietor that negroes should *have* money, and should *spend* it. To encourage the latter part of this plan, he furnishes a shop in an apartment of the building next to the mill, with everything they may wish to buy that is proper for them; cloth cheap and showy; garments gay and warm; crockery; beads; crosses; guano, or the American palm, that they may form neat hats for themselves; little cooking pots, &c. &c. He puts everything at low prices; and no pedler is permitted to show his wares on the estate.

The next apartment is the carpenters' room; in which were tools and benches, some articles of household furniture; plane-cases neatly made, and soaking in oil; acana wood, hard to saw, and easy and smooth to plane, dark as cherry tree, a quantity of which was getting out for bars and sashes for the splendid hospital which he is building for the estate.

The next apartment is the clothes room, fitted up with cases of 300 drawers, numbered, and the name of a negro and his wife on each drawer, and their apparel made to their size, and laid away in it against the first of January, when two suits are given at once. To prevent fraud their clothes are marked with indelible ink; their tools also are marked.

To prevent any abuse from the reception of two suits of clothes at once, there is a parade day every week, when each negro is obliged to appear with one suit on, and one in his hand, accompanied with his blanket. If anything is missing the whole are assessed to replace the lost article, as he thinks no roguery takes place among them but it is generally known.

The next apartment is an elegant hall, floored with wood, an unusual thing in this country, glazed and painted, that it may be safe and warm in any change of weather. In one of the windows was an Æolian harp of great power and sweetness, resounding at the touch of the norther.

The next apartment is a breakfast room and library ; through which we passed into a spacious bedchamber. The last three apartments are hung round with pictures, many of them in fine taste.

The piazza at the eastern end of the building serves for a dining hall. In this is a fine piece of statuary, representing a water deity, with a cask on his knee and the bung out, filling a marble vase with water for washing hands before and after dinner.

Connected with the eastern end of this building is a lying-in hospital and inclosure for the young creoles, an interesting and populous spot. You first enter the yard, inclosed by a plastered wall, the top of which is set with broken glass. This yard has a plastered floor like a coffee-dryer, that the creoles may not be able to find dirt to eat, which they are prone to do, and which brings on swelling of the bowels, and destroys many of them. This yard is shaded by trees set in boxes, and leads to the lying-in hospital. Here we saw a double row of cradles well filled, and a young creature only fifteen years old sitting between two of them to take care of her twins. In the whole inclosure were ninetyfive creoles under ten years of age ; and the most discontented little thing among them became instantly quiet, when perched in naked ebony on his master's arm. Children are sometimes destroyed through the jealousy of the husbands, and also through the neglect or abuse of unnatural mothers. One woman was pointed out to me suspected of having made it easy for four of her children to die ; they died. At the birth of the fifth the master warned her that if the child did not live, she should smart for it ; he lives, and is one of the finest of the creoles. From the very unusual success in raising

creoles on this estate, these hints deserve the consideration of planters. As a premium for rearing children, the mother of six living children is freed from labor for life, and has her maintenance on the estate.

North from the principal building, on the batey already described, beyond a valley of two or three hundred yards, and on a rising ground, is erecting a splendid infirmary for the estate. The length of the building is 126 feet, and the breadth 30. The basement story is finished, and the principal story is almost completed. The building is intended for those who are morally infirm, as well as physically. At each end of the infirmary, therefore, in the basement story, is an apartment called the stocks, the one for male criminals, and the other for female. They are spacious arched rooms, and well ventilated with spiracles.

The stocks are formed by two thick planks, with holes large enough to admit the small of the leg, cut half in the upper plank and half in the lower, and made fast together at the ends. Attached to this contrivance for securing the legs, which extends across the apartment, is a bed and bedding, and pillows, that offenders may lie without needless pain, and think over their cases.

In the basement also is another large and spacious room, occupied as a store-room, but which, in case of insurrection, is intended as a place of confinement. Smaller rooms in the basement are prepared to receive persons with contagious diseases, as leprosy, &c. There are two arched ways leading from the infirmary to the yards in the rear, one for each sex. The yard is inclosed with a high wall, and a partition separates the sexes; and in each half is a kitchen and convenient offices, and a cistern into which water is poured from without, that there may be no communication between the sick and the well.

The principal story of the infirmary displays taste and humanity. We ascended into it from the front by a flight of twenty spacious stone steps. It is divided into six rooms. Two of

these rooms are floored with boards, and glazed, that every delicacy of treatment may be observed towards the very sick.

The building is to terminate with a third story on the central part, divided into two rooms, the principal for the matron, or grand nurse of the establishment ; the other for the apothecary.

As prevention is preferable to the cure of diseases, and many are contracted by exposure in the rainy season, the proprietor has erected thirty sheds scattered over the estate, to which the laborers may flee in case of sudden showers. In sickness, when necessary, wine is furnished.

In 1825 the small pox broke out on this estate, and ninety slaves had it the natural way, of which only *one* died. He had at the same time forty sick of other diseases.

The proprietor carefully avoids overworking his negroes, as tending to fill his infirmary. In the winter he gives them a recess from labor at noon of an hour and a half, and in summer of three hours, and no night work is permitted on the estate. The best comment on these humane arrangements is, that a more healthy, muscular, active set of negroes, as many have remarked, is not to be found on the island.

The bohea, or square of negro huts, is judiciously arranged on a hill, fifteen or twenty rods east from the principal building of the batey. Two families are accommodated under one roof, and a space of a few yards is left between each two buildings, fenced by a high open picket. In this manner the negro huts enclose a large square, which is entered by an iron gate. When the plantation becomes as populous as the proprietor hopes it will, this square will be a little negro city, with streets running at right angles.

The valley between the mansion and the bohea is to be an extensive garden ; and at the head of this valley are forming immense tanks, to be filled with water from the well arranged coffee driers, from which every rod of the garden can almost without trouble be irrigated.

Other parts of his plan, less original, are omitted. I only

add, that the 1st of January is the negro's red letter day on this estate. On this day no work whatever is done ; it is entirely given up to mirth and festivity. All liberties, except crimes, are permitted. At three in the morning, they make a general rush upon their master, and wish him a happy new year. Each receives a handkerchief as a present. Pardons are distributed in all cases, except of crimes which the laws of the land proscribe ; and for one day in the year the slaves are everything but master.

Mr S. has a peculiarity in sending his coffee to market, to which he may be indebted for getting the highest price. Coffee he remarks, often suffers by rain, on its way to Havana, though covered with hides,—and afterwards by dampness in stores and at sea. To prevent this he packs his coffee in large casks, neatly made by his own coopers, of atage wood, and iron bound. By this means it arrives at Havana and the most distant market perfectly *dry*. In cleaning his coffee, he highly approves of Chartrand's divider, and has a half dozen of them in use.

His crop of corn this year was 3750 bushels. I saw in his loft many bags of dried plantain, saved in the abundant season for his negroes in that season when it yields less abundantly. A new species of corn, I saw also in sacks, which he called melio.

Mr S. has prepared his last bed, or tomb, at the northern entrance into his estate ; and the coffin, he remarked, was to be soon made of incorruptible wood.

He intends soon to hire a musician, to be employed in selecting and instructing a band of forty of his negroes, that they may amuse him in his declining years, and attend him with mournful airs to his grave.*

At an expense of \$500, he has caused an actual survey to be taken of the road from Havana to his estate. As it is filled out with all the turns and angles of the distance, and with the

* See second visit at Mr S.'s estate, May 15th.

villages by the way, it is a valuable map. He observes that the river which crosses the public road in San Antonio, merges in that town, and pursues its course eighteen miles under ground, two of it under a bog, without communicating with it, and at last emerges from under high ground, and is thence boatable for a mile to the sea. Mr S.'s opinion deserves consideration; yet it is not likely to be very generally embraced. When a stream sinks out of sight in an island full of sumideros and caves, extending nobody knows how far to the points of the compass or the centre; it is matter of conjecture wholly, from whence comes water emerging at any point. No person has followed the subterranean stream, nor ascertained its course. The opinion, therefore, will be regarded by some as gratuitous, by few as more than probable.

A branch of the Canimar, in the Lemonal, I think it is, disappears, and after passing under ground a quarter of a mile, reappears under circumstances, which occasions a belief in the neighborhood, that it is the same stream. This fact gives some countenance to the opinion of Mr S.

The wells at St Marks are of different depths; some are 81 feet deep. On the northern side of the Hacienda some are 309 feet deep; and some on the next estate 264. At D'W.'s there are some only 7 feet! The latter estate is about four miles from the sea or south shore.

* * *

LETTER XXXVII.

TO ———

ST. MARKS, APRIL 12th, 1828.

ON the whole, I have concluded that the most beautiful class of trees on the island is the Royal palm; and it is also very useful. It has curious peculiarities; though it sometimes runs

a hundred feet high, it has no roots as big as a finger. Its roots resemble those of asparagus, and are innumerable. It is further remarkable, that this tree commences at once a full sized trunk, and its age is determined, not by its size, but its height, or the number of circles marked on its smooth, white, polished surface, which looks as if it came out of a lathe.

Another peculiarity of the palm, is that it has no substance in the interior of its trunk. Yet the outside, to the thickness of an inch and a quarter, makes the firmest of *boards*, and when dry, is hard enough to turn a board-nail. In ascending the palm, there is no limb from root to top, except it be the bush near the leaves, on which a large quantity of *seed* grows, of which swine are as fond as of acorns, nuts, or corn. The *leaves*, which appear like a superb tuft of waving feathers, are invaluable for thatching; the part of the stem, which clasps the trunk, and which unrolls and falls with the leaf, serves to form the sides of the hut, and to *saddle* the ridgepole of a thatched building; to make gutters for water, and ribbons in the manufacture of cane baskets, and strings for various uses. The top yields a substance, boiled as a vegetable, not exceeded in delicacy and flavor by the finest cauliflower. It is also *pickled*. But this delicacy for the epicure, costs the life of the tree. Out of the palm alone, a comfortable house may be constructed without a nail from ground to ridgepole.

In a former letter,* it has been remarked, that the bejuco of the forest often subdues and destroys the largest trees, and changed in its nature from vine to tree, triumphantly occupies the spot from which it has ejected the unfortunate creole. But I have sometimes seen the ambitious vine, after a long and hard fought battle, completely defeated. It is generally in those cases, where it has fixed on the Quiebra Hacha, or break-axe, as its victim. For strength and hardness, for towering height and size, this may be called the king of the Cuba forest.

* See page 59.

A single stick of it for a Spanish sugar mill, has cost from six to twelve ounces, that is, from one to two hundred dollars.

I have seen the ambitious and parasitical bejuco in the beginning of its onset on this magnificent tree, in the height of the battle, and at the end of it. The young serpent seemed aware of the difficulty of the enterprise, and wound himself round the tree midway from the root to the top, in a compact spiral, himself the size of a large cable. The tree was very sensible to its gripe, swelling out above and below, half covering the folds of the serpent with its fungous growth. The top gave signs of yielding; but the tree, to save its life, sent out a stately succor below the deadly grasp, which was already a foot in diameter, and will be a lofty tree, when the main stem shall have perished. On the Buena Esperanza, there is yet standing a huge Quiebra Hacha, twenty feet in circumference, infolded and webbed by bejuco from top to bottom; but *both dead*; they have perished together in the mortal struggle.

The plantain is one of the greatest blessings of heaven to a tropical climate. It probably constitutes three fourths of the subsistence of the black population of the island, and is a healthful luxury on the table of every white man in town and country. The ease and abundance with which it is raised, is astonishing. It will grow among rocks with almost no soil; in gorges, where nothing else can be cultivated, among coffee, repaying to that delicate plant by its shade, as some think, what it takes from the common soil for its aliment, but loves a patch of good soil entirely to itself.

Planted in the manner last hinted, it is a beautiful sight. They are set in rows about fifteen feet apart. When the patch is in a mature state, there are from three to seven plants in a hill. The plant grows from twelve to fifteen feet high; its stem is from six to ten inches in diameter; its top has long waving leaves like a palm, and each plant yields about a hun-

dred plantains if a female, and a less number, but of a larger size, if a male.

The economy of this plant cannot be observed without admiration. From the centre of its leaves, it pushes forth a purple cone, ten inches long, and four in diameter, in form like a pond lily before it opens. This cone hangs suspended from a strong stem. One leaf soon unfolds from the cone, displaying under its shelter a row of young plantains, which, with maternal tenderness it protects from the suns, and cold, and wet, till they can bear them, and then falls. Then another leaf relaxes from the cone, and brings forward its brood as before; and the process goes on till the bunch of plantains is as large and heavy as the stem can conveniently sustain and perfect, and the rest wither in immaturity.

The most delicate plantain is the African, called the fig banana. It is gently, but effectually medicinal, when the bowels are affected by heat; and, to a northern palate, is a fine substitute for baked apples.

The plantain is good in a green state, and when ripe, boiled and roasted, fried and baked. With eggs it makes a fine pudding. Sliced and dried in the sun, it may be long preserved for ordinary use. It has been sometimes gathered, just as it was ripe, and carefully dried in the sun, till it was in a cured state, preserving it from all dew and dampness during the process. In this state it has been exported to old Spain with profit.

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO ———.

ST MARKS, APRIL 13th, 1828.

IN travelling in Cuba, I have heard the remarks of many planters on the subject of arguadiante, or ardent spirit, and its

effects on negroes. As it is sold for half a bit for a junk bottle of it; as taverns are thick all over the country, where it can be bought; as few negroes are without money, and most of them are passionately fond of the liquor, it follows pretty naturally that they drink it, and the usual evils, physical and moral, are lamentably frequent. Most of the quarrels on plantations are traced to this cause; more punishments are inflicted for intemperance, and crimes committed in consequence of drinking, probably, than for all other faults whatever. The accidents befalling volantes may be commonly charged to the intoxication of caleseros.

The evils are manifestly many and great. To correct them, some masters and administrators punish intoxication with great severity. This however, does not prevent the repetition of the crime; for the temptation is irresistible, when the habit of drinking has been once formed.

On some plantations, a little indulgence is given; a moderate quantity is allowed to the negroes at the birth or christening of a master's child; and in the rainy season, to prevent colds and fevers when they have been wet. One thing is certain;—in these ways, the relish is kept in lively remembrance in the elder negroes, and a dangerous appetite is awakened in the younger, which must be expected to seek irregular gratification. And this will lead to those rigorous measures on a plantation, for which neither the pleasure, nor even the benefit of the indulgence, if there be any, can be considered as any compensation.

I would be the last man to abridge the comforts of this unfortunate class of men, but I am entirely satisfied that the greatest kindness which can be rendered them, is to place the liquor on all occasions, wet and dry, beyond their reach. As an article of *materia medica*, prescribed by an enlightened physician, I would not absolutely proscribe it. That, however, should be the only exception.

On three contiguous estates of more than four hundred

slaves, has been made, with fine success, the experiment of a strict exclusion of ardent spirit at all seasons of the year. Not only drunkenness, but *drinking* is punished, however moderate. A sure method is practised for detecting the drinker, however sober he may be. It is impossible to disguise his breath. Various expedients were attempted, such as infusion of strong scented herbs in his posset. But the unerring nose of the administrator or mayoral, always detected the offender, and inevitable correction followed, till the offence is almost unknown on the estates.

It was a deep conviction on the part of the proprietor that the bad health and early death of many of his slaves, and the irregular conduct in their families, and consequent suspicions, and jealousies, and bloody revenges, in some cases amounting to murder of child and parent, were chiefly imputable, directly or indirectly to ardent spirit, which brought him to the resolution of banishing it entirely from his estates. The success has very far exceeded his most sanguine hopes. Peace, and quietness, and contentment, reign among the negroes; a better state of health is evident; creoles are reared in much greater numbers than formerly; the estates are in the neatest and highest state of cultivation, and order and discipline are maintained with very little correction, and the mildest means.

The writings of enlightened physicians of the present day, accord with the theory of this humane planter. They utterly deny the necessity of spirit to the laborer in heat and cold, in seasons wet and dry. Substitutes more salutary may in cases of exposure to drenching rains be adopted. Molasses, hot water, and ginger, are the best correctives of the chill, followed by a warm and fine garment. What is the effect of the sudden flash of liquid fire, compared with the genial warmth obtained by these milder means?

A serious evil on the other hand arises from the custom of giving a glass of spirit to a wet negro or a wet gang. They

will love to get wet and cold, that they may be warmed by their favorite beverage. Their motive is obvious.

But cut off all hope of the indulgence, and cases of exposure, of fever, and death will be diminished. As a means, then, of order and peace, and contentment on a plantation; a means of keeping the hospital empty, and the bohea full of vigorous laborers, and the plantation populous, and cheerful with creoles, let ardent spirit be banished from the plantation.

Nine tenths of all the crimes and poverty and calamity of the United States, spring from ardent spirit, and the abuse of liberty in the use of that dangerous poison. Can a humane planter, whose word is law in this regard, confer a greater blessing on his slaves, than to provide that they live in happy ignorance of the moral and physical evils which oppress so many of the free?

LETTER XXXIX.

TO HON. N—— D——, L.L.D.

APRIL, 1828.

DEAR SIR,—There is no subject connected with Cuba, of greater interest to a curious stranger, than that of its population; and none concerning which there is greater difficulty in coming to a correct statement. I have listened to conversation on the subject among well informed men, Spanish and foreigners; and have carefully examined the most recent authorities in public documents, and consulted the last edition of Baron Humboldt, 1827, and the statistical exposé of B. Huber, 1827; not with the hope of coming to any accurate result, but of arriving at something near the truth, as to the present population of the island, and the several proportions of white, and colored, and negro, of freemen and of slaves.

The latest census of the island was taken in 1817; and from various circumstances it cannot be supposed very accurate,

especially in regard to the slave population. As slaves may be subjects of taxation, some masters would be likely to keep back part of their number. As the importation of slaves has been prohibited by law, those which have been brought to the island since 1819, a very considerable number, cannot regularly enter into the enumeration. Much must be left to conjecture, therefore, in estimating the population of the island. Without going into dry details, not very suitable in a letter, but which may be seen at a minute extent in Humboldt, and also in Huber, in which latter, however, there are some very considerable errors, and some manifest inconsistencies, I shall content myself with giving a few tables from these authors, and stating the opinion of the most judicious and intelligent men with whom I have had the privilege of conversing in the country, and two of the principal cities.

POPULATION OF CUBA ACCORDING TO CENSUS IN 1817.

Males.	Females.	Clergy, Secular.	Clergy, Regular.	Monks.	Troops.	Total.
129,656	109,140	515	348	171	19,430	259,260

FREE POPULATION.

*Of Color.**Black.*

Males.	Females.		Males.	Females.		Total.
70,512	29,170		28,373	26,002		154,057

SLAVE POPULATION.

*Of Color.**Black.*

Males.	Females.		Males	Females	Imported in 1817.	Total.
17,813	14,499		106,521	60,322	25,976	225,131

RECAPITULATION.

White,	-	-	-	-	-	-	259,260
Free black and colored,	-	-	-	-	-	-	154,057
Slaves,	-	-	-	-	-	-	225,131

Total - - 638,448

BARON HUMBOLDT, FOR END OF 1825.

Free	{ Whites 325,000	455,000
	{ Colored 130,000	
Slave		260,000
Total	- -	715,000

Till the census which is taking by the Captains of Partidos, and the Alcaldis of jurisdictions throughout the island, intended to be very exact, but which will, from the nature of the operation in this country, be liable to considerable imperfection, shall make its appearance, I venture to put down the whole population of the Island at 1,000,000 of souls; of which 500,000 are free, and 500,000 are slaves. Of the free, 300,000 are white, 125,470 are mulattos, and 74,530 negroes. Of the slave population, about 50,000 are mulattos.

The proportion of slaves in this estimate is considerably greater than the writers before me have acknowledged. It is a favorite idea in this island, and very well founded too, that so great is the proportion of the free, that there is no manner of danger from insurrection of the slaves. Fully to enjoy the comfort of this idea, there seems to have been a pretty general consent to diminish the number of slaves. But whoever has travelled in the cultivated parts of the island, which is an extensive portion of the whole surface, where a few caballerias of land call for a hundred laborers—whoever considers the imposing fact that in the twelve Partidos of the province of Havana* alone, in 1817, there were no less than 625 sugar estates, and 779 coffee estates; and that both have been increased, the latter astonishingly, since that time, perhaps doubled in number, in consequence of the high price which coffee then bore, will have no difficulty, I think, in allowing the above estimate of the slave population of the island.

Of the free population, the great majority is Creole, that is, *born on the island*. There are many emigrants from old Spain and the Canaries. There are many foreigners from the United States, from France and French islands, from England, Ireland and Scotland, from the Netherlands and Germany, from Switzerland and Italy.

A large proportion of the slave population is from Africa;

* See Baron Humboldt, p. 194. Par Edit. 1827.

for there is a decided preference given to African over creole negroes ; and population was not much encouraged before the importation was prohibited, and embarrassed. Indeed, it was the policy of sugar planters to purchase males alone ; and they were not allowed wives off of the estate ; therefore they were wholly denied a privilege, even more eagerly coveted by blacks than whites, and were condemned to monkish celibacy—or that which was very much worse. A policy so barbarous has been abandoned by most, but it is retained by some, and even by coffee planters where the labor is comparatively light, either excluding females from the estate, or locking up the sexes in separate buildings. But since the convention between Spain and England, by which the slave trade on the coast is made penal, the price of female slaves in Cuba has considerably risen. And it is evident that the difficulty and danger of obtaining them from the coast, though it does not prevent the attempt, and the attempt is sometimes successful, is, and will be, attended with circumstances of considerable alleviation to the condition of the slaves, especially the female slaves.

Though the subject is attended with delicacy and difficulty your inquisitive and philosophical mind will not be satisfied without some remarks on the elemental classes of this million of souls ; for the two Americas and the islands which lie in their neighborhood, have been the subject of your patient research for more than thirty years. I cannot have had my eyes open four months in the interior, and in two of the principal cities of Cuba, without forming notions of character in some degree definite. But I would suggest them with respectful and kindly caution.

The foreigners settled on the island have naturally brought with them prejudices and partialities, derived from their natal soil. But, in very many, these soon become considerably modified by situation and local interest. They have a domicile in the country, and a fee simple in the soil, and they become conformists in manners and customs which are innocent ; and

sometimes even in those of an immoral character, perhaps from easiness and love of pleasure, from the constraining power of fashion, or the graver consideration of interest. Waiving any obvious remarks on this fact, as it bears on the principles of the higher order, the political tendency of this conforming disposition, in matters indifferent, is to conciliate mutual confidence, and beget a Cuba feeling, a patriotic and national sentiment, which in the end may answer high purposes.

If there is a disposition in foreigners to conform in costume, equipage, building, table, salutations, and other indifferent matters to Spaniards and Creoles, there is evident respect, in turn, shown to the intellectual endowments, advantages of education, enlightened experiments and improvements in agriculture, and instruments of husbandry, regard for the Sabbath, and moral habits by which many emigrants are distinguished; and in some of these particulars they are slowly imitated by the natives. Time may, therefore, be expected to bring about an improved national feeling in the island, and advantageously amalgamate materials of different origin and character. Some progress in this important respect has been undoubtedly made.

As the great body of the free population is Spanish and Creole, you will be chiefly anxious to learn something of the classes into which they may be distinguished. There are two strongly marked divisions, and these are susceptible of subdivisions, but I wish to avoid minuteness. These two divisions are the titled and opulent, and the Monteros, whom I may with propriety call the yeomanry of the island.

I shall resume the subject.

LETTER XL.

TO HON. N—— D——, L.L.D.

APRIL, 1828.

I HAVE already stated to you the two leading classes, or divisions of the free population of Cuba. Of these, the titled and opulent Spaniards have the first claim on our attention. Huber states that there are thirteen Marquises, and sixteen Counts; but the actual number on the island is eighteen Marquises, and twentytwo Counts. Some of them derive their titles from noble families in Spain; others have been created counts, or marquises, for real or supposed subserviency to the royal interests; and it is understood that others have received a title for a handsome *douceur* sent to the royal treasury.

The title is not a mere name and feather. The marquis and the count have peculiar privileges; one is independent of arrest for debt, and exempted from the ordinary punishments for crimes, treason, I believe, excepted. Money, money may settle accounts for *them*, which, for others, must be settled by the halter. They have no *ex-officio* connexion with the government; but there is a disposition, if their endowments are not too insignificant, to bring them into the *cabildo*, and other public offices.

We may remark in passing, that a military title also exempts a man from liability to arrest for debt by the civil officer, though, of course, he is subject to a military tribunal. Many commissions are purchased for the benefit of this privilege, and other incidental conveniences attending it, while yet the holders are not attached to the army.

There is not that stare of awe and homage in the island when a count or marquis is passing, as in the chivalric mother country. They seem to be regarded very much as other men; and, in fact, as made of the selfsame clay. Some of the families are highly respectable, independent of rank and opulence; but

generally, this island nobility is behind the present period of the world, and belongs to the age and the court of the Second English Charles. They are however very opulent, with few exceptions ; but some of them take advantage of their privileges to delay the payment of debts.

It is probable that some part of the deference formerly paid to the privileged orders was lost during the constitutional government of Spain and the colony, and the character attached to many of them has not tended to recover it. The day has gone by, especially in the neighborhood of the western continent, when deference can be commanded without deserving it. In most parts of North and of South America, there are none but nature's nobles, the highly gifted, and the nobly virtuous, and public spirited. There is no exemption of some from the obligations of laws binding on others ; and government is not for any superior benefit of the few, but to impart equal protection ; and *he who will be chief, must be servant of all.*

In the event of foreign war, the counts and marquises would be firm to the *king and island*, for they have much to lose ; but their physical force would be nominal, as they have no vassals whom they could safely arm. If in the course of events the king and island should conclude to separate, their immense landed property must bind them to the island, as the royal treasury has too many calls upon it to remunerate their attachment to the throne. There is vast wealth in the island of Cuba. I would venture to say that few spots on this globe of no greater dimensions than Havana, are richer than that city. A lady of distinguished family, dying since the year came in, (I have it from high authority,) left \$400,000 to each of her numerous children, and the immense territory of ninety-nine haciendas to be portioned among them.* The knowing ones affirm a considerable number to be worth from four to eight millions each ; and, without regard to the funds of England, and America, in

* A hacienda is a circle of land usually six miles in circumference.

which vast sums have been deposited, the evidences of property in sugar estates, and coffee estates, and haciendas, go far to justify their opinion. There is vast wealth in the island, if we consider the great number of planters of a secondary class, and the number of merchants doing business independently of loans from banks. The landholders scattered over extensive districts, whether in part owing for their estates, or clear of debt, constitute a class of enlightened and educated men, to whom the island must look with confidence in the possible events before it. They are fast anchored, and will generally abide by the ship. Their property is too great to be sold to adventurers, and too pleasantly situated, if prosperity should attend the island, to be abandoned with sacrifice.

The other large class of the free population of the island, entirely Spanish, is the Monteros, whom I would describe by the name of the yeomanry of the island. When I heard in my own country of Monteros in Cuba, for very little has been known of the interior of the island, I supposed them a sparse population, confined to the mountainous districts. And when I first saw a young Montero, in his simple dress of a red striped shirt and trousers, with his long machet, or broadsword, suspended from his waist by a handkerchief, mounted on an apperaro, or straw saddle, his feet dangling without stirrups, flying rather than travelling through the Sumidero, I gazed after him as a rare sight from the mountains, as I would gaze after a Cossack. The same had misled me, as I presume it has thousands.

Soon I was partially undeceived. But it was weeks before I suspected the fact, that they constitute, except in great cities, the great majority of the free population of the island. They are not more in the mountains than in the plains. They are diffused over the whole surface of the island, where there is any population at all, and engaged in a great variety of employments. With few exceptions, they are the mayorals on coffee and sugar estates. Many have the charge of haciendas and hartos, and on horseback watch and keep in check the immense droves of

cattle, almost wild, which graze in those broad pastures. Innumerable portreros, or smaller pastures, are owned by Monteros, where they fatten swine, as well as cows and calves, for the neighboring and distant markets, and subsist those fine oxen, whose labor is so profitable to them.

A great branch of business with the Monteros, is carting. Sugar estates and coffee estates furnish them employment in carrying their bulky and heavy produce to the embarcaderos, and the ports of entry, and in bringing back the necessaries for the plantation. In cities the Monteros are considerably employed about the wharves in trucking with their oxen; I have noticed their dexterity at Matanzas with surprise. With the ox-reins in their hands, they will drive to half an inch in the narrow streets, and move about as quick as the trucks of our own country with horses.

Others are employed as harrieros, drivers of horses and mules, in strings of from five to fifty, each animal carrying two hundred weight. The drove is either wholly, or in part, owned by the drivers.

If I were to select one term, which should characterize the greatest number of them, I should call them farmers. The *Sitios* all over the island are small farms, and owned and cultivated by Monteros. And they live in the greatest simplicity on those fine constituents of bone and muscle, pork and plantain.

The tobacco country is chiefly cultivated by Monteros; and there, if better disposed to labor, and free from the vice of gambling, they would soon rise into wealth.—Such are the Monteros of Cuba; and if furnished with the same advantages of intellectual and moral improvements, they might bear comparison with the yeomanry of the United States.

- It is not magnifying the importance of this class of the free population to say, that the safety of the island in peace and war is in a good degree in their hands. They are its militia, and always armed. Wherever there is a numerous slave population, there is danger. They are much on the plantations as mayorals,

or carters, and are firm in the opinion, that one Montero, if there were any difficulty, is equal to fifty negroes. The best security of the island against the horrors of St Domingo, is this armed militia.

Danger may be apprehended from the Mexicans and Colombians, if their affairs were in a more settled state at home. If a little pains were taken to improve the Monteros by education, and to discipline them in bodies as militia, they would be a powerful defence against irruption, and would stand between the invaders and the negroes, and prevent their seduction.

There ought to be a generous confidence reposed in the Monteros, by their countrymen of the island. They have generally a freehold, and some of them are rich. Some that wear the simple striped shirt and trousers at home, as the highlander his plaid, appear in the garb of gentlemen in church and on a journey. The sitio and portrero under the care of an industrious man, not unfrequently becomes a field of coffee, and the farmer is changed into a planter with thirty or forty negroes.

The Monteros are not only very numerous, but increasing faster than any other species of population on the island. This increase is partly by emigration from the Canaries; for most of the emigrants from those islands fall into this class or establish themselves in the little shops and taverns, which sprinkle the country roads and villages.

But they are increasing by natural population. They marry very young,—the girls usually from thirteen to eighteen, and the young men from seventeen to twentyone. A handsome young girl was asked by a stranger, whose children were the six he saw playing round her. "*Mine*," she replied; and she was but twentytwo years old. Two brothers and two sisters near where I am writing have fortyfive children, and are young enough to have many more. A single mother of this neighborhood has had twenty; some of them, I believe, she has lost. I am told the average number of children in a family is from eight to fourteen, as nearly as a look into a well known neigh-

borhood could determine. This is an increase in a higher ratio than in the United States; and the island, if they should pay greater attention to education, will at no distant day be strong in such a yeomanry. And, I add,

There is an increasing attention to education among the Monteros. The greater success of those who can read and write stimulates parents to school their children. The sensible Montero, who can neither write nor read, feels no paltry jealousy of his children's rising to a higher grade in the community than he has been able to reach; but lamenting his own want of early advantages, gives them, if possible, to his children. There is an instance in this neighborhood exactly in point. A father who cannot read has brought a teacher for his children from Havana; and should he have the wisdom and resolution to become himself a pupil, it will be to his immortal honor.

LETTER XLI.

TO HON. N—— D——, L.L.D.

APRIL, 1828.

THE cursory view of the free population of the island, taken in my former letters, would be imperfect, should I not attempt some account of its moral character. They have their virtues; and they have their vices. Of the first I shall speak with unfeigned satisfaction; of the last with regret, and, I hope, with candor, certainly without intentional exaggeration. For though my residence in this island has been short, I have been so absorbed in the subject of my investigation, and my feelings have risen so far towards enthusiasm, that I may almost lay claim to the local passion of patriotism. At least I must be allowed to say that few things could give me a satisfaction so solid or so great as to see their virtues increased a hundred fold, and their vices, deep rooted as they are, entirely eradicated.

It has been with great pleasure, that I have heard, in all parts of the island, which I have visited, of the *parental authority* and *filial piety* of the Spaniards. In a former letter I mentioned, on the authority of a respectable and intelligent Spaniard of Old Spain who had passed six weeks among them, the patriarchal state in which Monteros live, in a district about fifty leagues to the windward of Matanzas. The case is very similar fifty or sixty leagues to the leeward from the same city. A few anecdotes will best illustrate the point which I give on unquestionable authority, and only at second hand from the Montero himself, whom I have seen again and again.

Having long been employed by the lady, to whom I refer, as a carter of produce to the market, he sometimes took the liberty of conversing with her on his own affairs; and once mentioned the grief, that had come upon himself and his wife by the gross misconduct of his son, then eighteen years old. "Why, madam," said he, "the rash boy took the liberty the other day of going to the next village, without ever consulting his parents, and purchased a machetta, and brought it home. I can never forgive the shopkeeper for consenting to him. But, I assure you, he was not long in possession of his long blade and silver handle, and Russia leather belt. He got his mother to make *impegnio* for him, that he might not have the shame to carry it back, at least before he had kept it a day or two. But I was deaf, and sent him off at once; and I think he will not be likely to take an important step again, without the advice of his parents."

The age of majority, according to Spanish laws, I understand is fixed at twentyfive. A youth, married or unmarried, but at any rate in his twentyfifth year, was so undutiful, in some matter of conversation, as to contradict his mother. But she instantly corrected the rudeness by a slap on his cheek, and he retired in confusion to vent his feelings in tears of contrition. The proverbial expression in Spanish denoting a spoiled child, "*consentida*," *a child consented to*,—a child having its will,—is

wittily happy, and implies a general sense of the necessity of authority and submission between the parties.

A youthful Montero, well known in this family, once thought the parental yoke too heavy, and left his father. After one day's absence, he regretted the undutiful step; but dared not return without a mediator. He therefore applied to a person who had great influence with his father, to make *impegnio* for him.

He readily attempted to bring about a reconciliation. The father complied with his friend's request to receive back his son; but as soon as he was gone, he said to his full grown boy,—“Where did you think you could hide yourself, that I should not find you?” And gave him a correction, which he will never forget.

Thus strict is the family discipline among the rude Monteros. It wears a gentler aspect in the higher classes of Spanish society. Here, submission and dependence are courteously demanded, and cheerfully rendered. The young members of the family, with affectionate humility, before retiring for the night, kiss the hands of their parents, and ask their benediction. They bestow it in words like these:—“May God make you a saint.”—“May God make you good and happy.” It cannot be denied that the most important relations and duties are recognised in this ceremony of every evening; and that its tendency is to enliven the sentiment of respect and affection between the parties, and to improve the sense of their dependence on the great common Father of parents and of children.

In this connexion, because probably growing out of this family custom among the Spanish, I mention a kindred custom among the negroes of their houses and estates.—the custom of asking their master's blessing, and of ejaculating a petition for his welfare. You cannot pass a half dozen little Creoles, without hearing their cheerful voices commending you to God; and the same thing happens in passing the men and women in the field. Whether from my costume they judge me to be a clergyman,

and on this account do it, I know not ; but as often as I dismount, a *stranger* before the house of a Spaniard, a servant as he takes the bridle, drops on one knee, and asks my blessing.

These customs on the part of slaves, which wear an affectionate and religious aspect towards their superiors, it is the soundest policy in masters to encourage, while at the same time it somewhat lightens the yoke of bondage on their necks. They have the pleasure to see, that they are recognised as the humble children of their master ; and though there is a measured and awful distance between them and others, they feel a sentiment of dutiful attachment to the family, and a common interest in its safety and welfare.

But to return from this digression. To preserve to a late period in life the sentiments of authority and duty, is the tendency of the custom among opulent Spaniards, of settling their married children near them ; and where they can, in the same house. This is one object in those large mansions in Havana, extensive and splendid enough to be denominated palaces. Three or four distinct establishments, or suites of apartments, are found under one roof, occupied by different members of the patriarchal household. Still in some respects they form one family. There are halls for common meetings,—at least for devotion, which is conducted by a chaplain. Something similar occurs among the Monteros, where a father on a few caballerias of land, establishes his married children and grand children all around him.

On this interesting subject I have enlarged, because it presents a very distinctive trait in the Spanish character—a trait for which, in substance, I have a profound respect. As to the means of its being maintained, and the manner of its being expressed, different nations, and different individuals of the same nation, may agree to differ. But as to the thing itself, as to the immense importance of family subordination, there can be but one opinion among pious, moral, or reflecting persons. Dutifulness to parents, tends to piety to God ; submission to domestic

authority prepares the members of the family, those thrifty elements of the larger community, to become bright examples of submission to the magistrates, and the laws. And I add, if submission and duty to superiors is not taught and secured in the family, it is probable it may hereafter be necessary for the magistrate to teach it, with a whip of scorpions.

The war of the revolution served in some degree to lower the high standard of family discipline in our country; the French revolution gave to it a still heavier shock. The cant and rant of that day was "Liberty and Equality;" and the thing at once penetrated the sanctuary of private life. Parents relaxed their authority, and children, of almost all ages, felt about as old as their parents, were quite as wise, and a little more independent, and a great deal more rude. It was some time before these capital errors were discovered; and it will be much longer before they are fully corrected.

* * *

A traveller on this interesting island, who passes through considerable districts of the country, or resides in any of the cities, and is a man of observation, cannot fail to be struck with the superior *temperance* of the Spaniards. I refer to temperance in drinking, not particularly to abstemiousness in eating. Their dishes (I speak of the opulent) are almost without number, and prepared with luxurious condiments; and seldom does a dish pass without a judgment upon its merits by the guests, on the evidence arising from *examining the premises*. The simple and nutritious fare of the Monteros is pork and plantain.

England and America may find a noble example in Cuba of greater caution than they see at home in regard to ardent spirits, cordials, and inflaming wines. It is very rare to witness an example of intemperance in town or country, in Spaniard or white Creole, gentleman or peasant. Healths are drunk sparingly; and toasts very seldom; and the guest is civilly asked, but, I think, never pressed to drink, except by foreigners; and even by them, by the force of good example, they are seldom

urged. Fruits and sweet meats in endless variety fill up more harmlessly those moments after dinner, which, in our own country, are often devoted to the history of a dozen of wine, its surprising longevity, its precise merits, and the drinking of it. One of the immediate consequences of this Spanish discretion is, a cheerful party without clamor, sprightly conversation without heat or dissention, and the pleasure of ladies' company to the close of the entertainment,—and fine health.

The Montero is abroad with his wagon or string of mules, in the dews of the night, under tropical and meridian suns, enveloped in clouds of dust, and exhausted with fatigue and sweat ; but with thanks often declines a glass of spirit to mix with his water, when hospitably offered by his employer, giving the slight apology that "it is heating." A hardier, healthier, more muscular race of men cannot be found on the mountains of New Hampshire or Vermont.

How different is the philosophy of many of the yeomanry of New England, so often appealed to as the virtuous progeny of the virtuous pilgrims. God forbid I should affix any stigma to them as a body. But how great is the number who pour down "the liquid fire of the West Indies," because they are hot, or because they are cold—because they are about to encounter fatigue, or compose themselves to rest—because they are in company, and are ashamed not to be social, or are alone, and must cheer their solitude—or for any other reason, and for no reason at all, till their farms and health are gone, and their families are in shame and beggary, or the care of the town.

The subtle vice of drinking freely of ardent spirit crept over the community, as it does over an individual, in so insinuating and gradual a manner, that the danger was almost unsuspected till it was instant ; and the chains of the habit were not felt before they were riveted. The community is at length awake to the danger ; and aware of the difficulty of returning to the better customs of fortyfive years ago. Something has been done ; and much remains to be done. It may at least be said that the

community is no longer thoughtless on the subject ; the temperate are anxious to remain so ; and are on their guard against those initiatory customs, which are the footpaths leading to the highway of drunkenness. The pulpit sends forth its awful warnings ; the press contributes its aid in tracts and paragraphs ; the laws, and magistrates, and municipal officers, do what they can ; and, by the blessing of Heaven, it will be strange if in fortyfive years to come we shall not retrace our steps, and be not ashamed to stand compared even with the temperate inhabitants of Cuba.

LETTER XLII.

TO MISS E—— A——.

RECOMPENSA, ST MARKS, APRIL 20th, 1828.

LAST evening amidst the usual sports of the twilight hour on the batey of the plantation, I could not help wishing that you were present to enjoy the scene, the natural fireworks of the country, as I may call the appearance and flight of the cucullos. I had scarcely arrived in the island, before this splendid insect was mentioned by all my young acquaintances, in terms, as I thought, of enthusiasm and extravagance natural to their age. But I observed that the elder and more sedate were almost as unmeasured in the terms of their description. I remembered with what delight in my childhood I used to gaze on the meadow or lawn, in the summer, when the fireflies were plenty, and cheered the darkness of the evening by the sudden flash, and as sudden an extinguishment, of their ray of light, and I supposed the cucullos might be an exhibition *a little* more splendid.

The season for them has come. One or two made their appearance the first evening, and were hailed like the first notes of birds in the spring. A few more cheered the second

evening ; and after the lapse of a week, and the fall of a heavy shower, they are innumerable. Their sportive hour commences with twilight. Out sallies the family, old and young, from the mansion to gaze. The cucullos dart in all directions, like so many brilliant stars or comets, over the tops of plantations and trees, now soaring and again descending ; suddenly they wheel from one direction to another, pursuing and pursued, and playing their circles round each other, with a sort of magical enchantment. It seems as if the stars had left their orbits, and were mingling in a mazy dance for the entertainment of the transported gazers.

Our glow-worm and firefly are not to be mentioned with the cucullos. The light which these give is not a flash, but steady, emitted through two large eyes, always visible except when they are flying from you, and it is light of uncommon whiteness and purity, not like the red glare of a lamp, not like the fiery radiance of Mars, but the soft beams of Venus, the morning and evening star. The swiftness and irregularity of their flight, the distance at which they can see and be seen, the diameter of the circle in which they are seen to attract each other, and the ardor with which they concentrate to a meeting, and whirl round a common centre, delight the spectator, and old and young are alive with pretty equal glee.

The children often use a lamp as a decoy, and the distant cucullo is attracted and taken. One cucullo is exhibited to attract others, and hundreds fall into the snare and become prisoners, and are kept in cages prepared for them, or in baskets covered with a cloth. They are apt to pine in confinement, and without great skill and care, they die. It is usual to feed them with cane and plantain ; and it is necessary carefully to bathe them in water, and dry them in the sun. They love the dews of evening, and showers of rain, and to bask in the sun ; and that management, which best combines the elements of their comfort, is most likely to preserve them alive.

While the family is amused on the bately, the negroes are

playing an active game in the avenues, and taking as many of these splendid captives as possible. The negro mothers use them as their nursing lamps. The creoles are seen running about with them in their hands, and sometimes with a half dozen of them cruelly strung on a spire of grass. This inhumanity to so beautiful an insect ought to be rebuked by their masters, but in many cases, it would be done with an ill grace, as young ladies, I am told, adorn their persons for evening assemblies with a string of cucullo brilliants, disposed on their necks or frocks wherever they may appear to the best advantage; willing, it should seem, to lose some of their moral charms, to display their persons in the greater lusture and to the better advantage.

In apology for this feminine custom, it is said that there is a part of the cucullo, which can be pierced without suffering to the insect. The precise amount of its sufferings with this kind of usage, the insect has no tongue to explain. With the tenderest treatment they expire by hundreds when in confinement. Out of three hundred attempted to be carried to the United States, by a careful acquaintance of mine, half a dozen only, survived the voyage. A distinguished Spaniard, whom I know, was more successful, and reached New York with fifty, and being something of a humorist, he gave them their liberty in Broad Street, in a fine evening for the purpose, and was sufficiently diverted by the astonishment of the citizens, and the eagerness of a thousand boys in pursuit of the sparkling fugitives. Your curiosity to see the cucullo is, I doubt not, sufficiently roused; yet I know you too well to believe that you would desire the pleasure at the expense of the pining and death of nineteen in twenty in leaving their own balmy climate.

The cucullo is about an inch and a half long, and one fourth of an inch broad. It resembles the snapping bug of our country, though a little longer. In the day time, it is sleepy, and gives but a faint light, of considerable brilliancy, however, when shaken. In the night they give light enough for the purposes of the nursery, and young eyes can see to read by them.

As you are delighted with natural history, I will close my letter, with a few more hints on the same subject. It is quite remarkable that there is scarcely a poisonous creature on the island. Snakes are quite inoffensive, though many of them are of considerable size, and prey on poultry. One was killed a few evenings since, with four young turkeys in his belly, about the size of pullets, and on examining his head, it seemed to me incredible that he should have swallowed them. His skin is beautifully checked and the lines strongly marked, but nothing of the brassy hue of the rattlesnake and mocassin. He is about seven feet long. Within a foot of the tail of this snake, were two small, sharp, boney toes, the object and use of which it seems difficult to conjecture.

I have had a fine opportunity of seeing the chamelion, the poetic animal, pleasantly celebrated in a fable you have often heard declaimed in our schools. I was the more interested by him because he was at liberty, and seen in his native spot and habits. He is of the lizard genus, but larger than any I have seen. He was on the ground, but darted like a red squirrel or ferret, the distance of a couple of rods to a tree, and ascended eight or ten feet. I sent for help to catch him, and in the meantime watched him, standing within a dozen feet of the tree. His body was on the trunk of the tree, near a rich foliage, and it was as green as a leek; his long tail hung down where there was little shade, and it was brown, with faint spots, somewhat resembling folds of changeable silk. Now and then he walked slowly up the tree, one foot at a time, and the colors were changed a few shades. I observed his form. His head was large for his body, and an epitome of that of the alligator. His eye was large like a squirrel's, but more sunk. He presented a side view to me, and his profile was serrated, or bristled, from his head half way down his tail.

A dextrous blow was given on his head, and he fell, and a negro secured his head in a noose of majagua. The poor fellow for a long time refused to die; and some hours afterward,

when he had been in spirit thirty minutes, with his head downward, to my astonishment, he leaped out of the bottle, and crawled on the floor.

The *lizards* are very plenty everywhere, and amuse by their darting motion, and at times by their tameness or stupidity. Some of them roll their tail into a spiral, like a dog; but generally they are straight and flexible. They often visit me in my bed chamber; and the little ones will perch on my glass, while I shave; and if touched, will dart a foot, and wait for a second hint.

The *scorpion* makes a figure on this island, but either has no poison about him, or it involves no danger. They are in considerable numbers; an old one has been seen with more than a hundred young ones on her back. They are found in the field, under old houses, in thatched roofs, and occasionally in the best apartments of the house, and even in the neatest beds. A friend of mine blew out his lamp, and leaped into bed, when he was astounded by a thrust in the back which seemed to him the wound of a rusty nail. On examination, they found a scorpion in the bed, which they cut open, and spread upon the wound, and nothing of its virulence was to be seen in the morning.

A very obliging friend secured for me a living tarantula, and a living scorpion. They were too troublesome to be kept alive, and were put into a caper bottle to be preserved in spirit. In these close quarters, the spider of terrific size absolutely declined all encounter, and the scorpion, with a single dart of his sting, left him motionless and dead. The same friend has presented me with a small snake preserved in spirit, which he discovered to be gifted with the curious faculty of running equally fast head foremost and tail foremost.

It is confidently said by most residents, that there is not a poisonous creature on the island. Some, however, make an exception of the tarantula, and affirm that there have been deaths from the bite of that ugliest of creeping things. I have

been unable to ascertain any instance on sufficient testimony ; and am inclined to regard it as a wonderful instance of divine mercy to this tropical island.

The tarantula has a fierce and inveterate enemy in a species of ichneumon, or Devil's-needle, which I have often seen as purple as the tarantula himself. The battle between this little winged dragon and the spider, has been often seen to last for twenty or thirty minutes. But in the winding up, the spider is generally a conquered enemy.

Thus having called your attention to several interesting classes of animals in the island, I leave the subject to your consideration and reading. I am not informed by books on the subject, but wholly by observation and verbal report.

LETTER XLIII.

TO MRS E—— A——.

ST MARKS, APRIL 24th, 1828.

WITH a young friend, and a servant, we started, just as the sun was rising, for the Mountains of San Salvador. The atmosphere was clear, and the air balmy, and the sun not oppressive, and we arrived after mounting a number of swells, at the romantic estate of La Content, at the very foot of the principal spur, before eight o'clock.

We passed between two extensive and beautiful coffee estates, belonging to Mr S. and the Baron Casa. The first mentioned contains 750,000 coffee trees, and is surrounded by a double row of palm trees, and his coffee was almost as much shaded by forest trees, so far as I could see into his vast field, as coffee nurseries generally are ; and the Baron's was shaded by rows of wassemar. I was curious to judge of the effect of so much shade on the staple ; the coffee trees were remarkably healthy, equal, and well ramified, and this is soil said to be

not the best. And of Mr S.'s coffee, I have been distinctly informed, that it is heavy, and bears the highest price in the market ; and though he seldom makes a great crop, he seldom fails of a respectable and pretty equal one.

Against the Baron's estate I observed a beautiful broad hedge of lime, out of the centre of which grew a row of alternating orange and palm, producing the finest effects to the eye. We passed in sight of one very extensive sugar estate, and met a moiety of its oxen, which appeared like an eastern drove of fat cattle going to Brighton. As we emerged from the forest, and rose on the hill, a sugar establishment, that of the Marquis of Ramos, was at once in full view. The first object that arrested attention, was a lofty and compact mass of cane, which sheltered a running brook, in the rainy season a river. We gazed for a few moments on the lively scene of two mules grinding, each with eight pair of oxen, the kettles disposing of the juice, and the driers completing the sugar for the box, on which were many hands with mauls reducing the snowy sugar to powder, and others with judgment separating the loaves into Havana white, and Havana brown, as the style is in our own country.

We observed the bagossa in great quantity accumulated under two immense circular tiled roofs, and large heaps of wood also, near the boilers, to aid in the boiling. It appeared to me strange, that the bagossa alone on the estate of Don Perez Uria, was sufficient to carry the steam mill, and to boil the sugar, and *no* wood whatever was consumed in either operation, and that on this fine estate the cane is not sufficient to boil the sugar while the cane is ground by oxen. There must be some principles of economy in the one case, worth inquiring after in the other, especially as wood is more scarce in this part of the island.

This neighborhood seems to have suffered much by the want of showers ; which led me to observe with the deeper interest the kind provision, which Providence, benign to all, and not un-

mindful of those minute members of its great family, birds and insects, and the smaller animals, has made to satisfy their thirst. Almost all the large trees are set with vegetable cisterns, to catch and hold the rain and dew. The leaves of these wild pines, which fasten themselves to the body and large limbs of forest trees, are stiff and semicircular, or like an eaves-gutter, and all the drops, which fall on them, are conveyed to the cup in the centre, within which I have measured eight inches deep of water, in a dry time. As thousands of these may be seen at once around you, in any part of the forest, the quantity of water in these little cisterns is an ample supply for the tribes, for whom it is provided.

How these plants, which are substances foreign to the tree, should become fixtures in their lofty situations, is matter of surprise. Like the thistle, they have winged seeds, which attach themselves to the living soil, and grow. They incline to fix on the horizontal boughs of the mighty ceyba, and I doubt not a single tree of this kind sustains barrels of water. A friend of mine was invited to see one of these trees felled, and six uteas, (animals of the size of a woodchuck,) were seen springing from the fallen tree. There is ordinarily to be seen on the white smooth bark of the ceyba, the covered path of the comajen, which is nothing more than a turnpike, which they form for going to water; their large black nests are to be seen in humbler situations on trees.

LETTER XLIV.

TO MRS E——— A———.

APRIL 25th, 1828.

WE rose at daybreak, and, with a cup of hot coffee, were on horseback before sun-rising, and commenced the ascent of the mountain, which overhangs the sheltered and romantic batey of

Mr A. This gentleman rents and owns the land to the very crest of the mountain. The first ascent was bold ; but there was a well made road, and charmingly sheltered by a pinon hedge ; it took a second bold turn or traverse, and was still sheltered by bushy pinon. This precipitous angle was all in a state of cultivation ; beans were luxuriant, and yams were planted ; and sufficient soil mixed with loose stones to promise ample crops. We rose rapidly into a high region of the mountain, and passed through the canucos, the gardens of the negroes of the plantation. They were set with tobacco, where we passed ; but the attendant pointed to other swells, which also were negro lands, where they raise corn, rice, and yams. Their allowance of land on this estate seems very ample, and in good cultivation.

As we left the canucos, we sent back the horses, and entered the forest in a good foot-path, no otherwise difficult than as it was very precipitous and stony. We at length emerged from the thick and thrifty forest, near the height of the loftiest spur but one, and were not a little surprised to find ourselves in a beautiful coffee estate. When we first passed this plantation, the morning vapors hung on the smaller hills and valleys below us, and reduced the whole to a sea of white vapor.

We continued to rise, and we turned from the coffee field, and at length surmounted the highest crest but one. From this elevation we descended into the seat of the Saddle, as the space between the two spurs is called, the spurs themselves making the pommel and the rearguard. We were soon on the highest mountain in San Salvador.

To our great mortification we were in this interesting spot completely enclosed by a towering forest. So thick were the trees on every side that we in vain sought a vista, through which we could look down on the elevated settlement we had this morning left, and every building of which should have been perfectly in view. In vain we sought even an opening from which we might distinctly see the water and Isle of Pines at the south,

and the port of Mariel, and the Gulf stream at the north. All this glorious panorama of seas and lands, of plains and mountain, was screened from us by a thick mat of trees and *bajuca*. Some friendly hand had cleared a small circle of two or three yards in diameter on the crest of the hill; and very possibly to this small circumstance the spur owes its name of *Taboureta*, or the Chair.

We thought little of the repose, to which the slight preparation and lounging name might invite us. Our object was to obtain a view from this natural observatory, the centre of so many magnificent objects. We looked about for a tree, which we might climb, and overlook the scene. But though there were many that ran up their tops like masts, and some of them were hung with *bajuco* like their cordage, there were none of these natural shrouds so worthy of confidence, that mere landsmen would risk their necks upon them at a sufficient height to obtain the prospect.

We endeavored to content ourselves for a few moments, with observing the striking difference, as to their soil and products, between these and the other mountains of the island, which we have ascended. The soil on these mountains is of that rich black complexion, which is selected for a sugar plantation; some of its swells, however, are red. The Saddle, that is, the two spurs and the fine ridge between them, is the best of soil, capable of being made into a fine garden of one or two cavalieros extent; and at this elevation, is reputed to be 2000 feet high. I had no instruments to measure it, but think it much less. Not only tropical fruits, but very possibly many of the delicious fruits of the temperate zone might be found to flourish on this spot. The present growth upon it is demonstration of the strength of the soil. The trees are too thick to be very large, and many of the largest have also been cut for timber needed for building in the cultivated neighborhood of the mountain. But they run high, and many of them if spared will grow large. The best woods are found here,—the arcana in great

plenty, guajani, jucuma, fregorica, acujas, jaiva or lance wood, a few fine mahogany trees, and cedar, and other ornamental woods. We passed a mahogany stump three feet in diameter, and though cut before the memory of our negro guide, after shaving from it an inch of rotten wood with his machet, he cut into a rich fine grain, almost as hard as the quiebra-hacha. Almost the whole mountain, except where it is too precipitous for a laborer to stand, is capable of cultivation. Very different are the highest mountains of Arcana to the windward, and of the ridge of Camiraoca as it appears to the eye, while passing through the long range of barren savanna at its feet. The little palm, the stunted palmetto, and a few bushes, is the most of what they produce.

On descending to the coffee estate before mentioned, the sea of fog had been evaporated by the rising sun, and a most lovely prospect lay open before us. We were still at a great elevation, perhaps two hundred feet only below the crest. Thence we looked down upon eight or ten coffee estates, on mountains and valleys less elevated. The peaks ran up of various heights, often cultivated to the very summit. The hills were sometimes extended on a long level like the roof of a house, and top and sides covered with coffee and plantain. Sometimes they presented a naked and sterile appearance; and this was almost always the case, where the soil was not bound to its native spot by being imbedded in stones. Such spots, as the eye wandered over the diversified prospect, were readily recognised as constituting the estates formed by the French emigrants from St Domingo, which the floods from the higher grounds had stripped of soil, leaving the coffee to perish.

But where the slopes were stony, the soil was mostly preserved, and the coffee estate in fine order. Though the estate on the upper edge of which we were standing, stretched itself down the steep side of the mountain, it was evidently in high health. The trees had not been suffered to run high, but the layers of branches from the top to within about a span of the

ground were thick and regular, and already bending with a heavy promise of a crop. We understood from our intelligent guide that the yielding even last year was good; and we could venture to say if the whole field should this year fulfil the promise of that part which we examined, that not a field in the plain will bear from it the palm of quantity or quality.

It seems probable, if we attempt to account for the thriftiness of this mountain plantation, that the roots find a deep soil in the mountain, and are cooled and moistened by its abounding with loose and flat stones, so that it bore the heat and drought of the last season even better than the plain itself. The judicious manager of this estate has inserted palms innumerable over his field, which will further serve to screen the coffee from the intense heat of the sun, on the inclined plane, which his trees occupy.

In the distance we could discover a considerable number of sugar estates, among the most extensive of which were those of the Marquis of Ramus, and Don Francisco Pedroso; and large fields of cane were still standing upon them, which their diligent cattle and slaves had not as yet been able to convert to a crop.

A *bajuca* turned tree, is always to me a very amusing sight; and we stopped a moment to take the distance between the constituent parts of the awkward thing that had a lusty top of five or six limbs, from a foot to two feet in diameter. There were five sections which constituted the trunk, and between the two principal, there was the space measured at the ground of thirtyone and a half feet. The original tree had been long dead and buried.

The servants met us with the horses as we were descending, and we arrived without excessive fatigue, with a fine appetite, after an absence of three delightful hours. In the afternoon of the same day we left our aged and respectable friends at La Content. As they had no servant on the estate, who could be relied on as a guide in our route among mountains unknown among us, our friend solicited a *calesero* of the Marquis of Ramus, familiar with the intricacies of the way, and at four

o'clock we set out for the Santa Susana, in the partido of Cal-lejabos, a distance of four long leagues.

Our course was continually among mountains, much of the way in a volante road, and sometimes in a footpath cut into the side of a hill, whose slope was but a few degrees removed from a perpendicular line, and we shrunk at the sight of the gorge 200 and 300 feet below us. Fine coffee estates were often seen running to the tops of the mountain, and sometimes old establishments were abandoned, or converted to portreros. A new species of soil was discovered on some of the swells, of a chalky appearance, or red soil mixed with clay, called coco. These were very sterile; destitute of coffee, or with a few plants here and there, famished and perishing. In the first part of the ride we passed through two sugar estates, belonging to the Marquis of Ramus; but the cane was much shorter and smaller than on several estates in the Sumidero, probably owing to the exhaustion of the soil by long culture.

The mountain scenery was as wild as any section of the Blue Ridge in Virginia, excepting the peaks of Otter, and the Natural Bridge. We crossed the same river perhaps a dozen times, in going a few miles,—a tinkling brook in the season of drought, but a roaring, foaming torrent in the rainy season; and at spots this is its character most of the year.

The evening closed over us before we reached the Santa Susana, so that we had but an imperfect view of spots, which were so enchanting that we resolved to return for a daylight view of them. The cucullos, however, seemed determined to compensate us for our disappointment, and in numbers almost innumerable, these sylphs of the evening, in robes of light, were flitting from hill to hill; and as we looked up from the deep valley into the purest sky, we might have been at a loss to determine which were stars, and which the insect comets, except by their rapid motion. As vespers were ringing, and the grateful sound was echoing among the valleys, we arrived at the Santa Susana, and were received by strangers, as if we had been old and expected friends.

LETTER XLV.

TO MRS E—— A——.

SANTA SUSANA, APRIL 25th, 1828.

THE young gentlemen of this estate, (recently returned from the University of C., with filial respect for their Alma Mater,) had many pleasant plans for the entertainment and information of a New England stranger. In the cool of the morning, we were on horseback to review the hermitage, which we had passed by moonlight, and to ascend to the position of what is reputed the highest coffee estate on the island. We descended from the mansion which stands on a beautiful hill, and crossed a neat bridge resting on two or three piers, with a lively *brook* now passing the declivity, which is often swelled to the very planks, by a sudden shower, pouring from a hundred gorges into this common race-way. Near this bridge is a half acre of siccaderos, here, adopting the term from the French, called *glaciers*, or, from the English, *barbecues*. It will serve to show the suddenness and nature of a mountain shower, to mention, that a careless manager of the estate, in an evening without clouds, went to bed neglecting the usual precautions; and in the morning it was found that a thousand robes of coffee had been swept from the barbecues by a shower in the night, the flood rushing over them.

Passing the bridge, we entered on a beautiful road cut at great labor into the stone ribs of the precipitous mountain, the right hand being a natural and sometimes an artificial wall, and the left guarded from the precipice by a broad, winding, well-shorn lime hedge.

Leaving the Santa Susana, we entered on a plantation of a very different aspect, as the manager neglects his coffee, and is rearing on a large scale, and educating game-cocks for the pit. In other hands equally skillful, this might be a very profitable branch of business, since the demand for combatants who have

been drilled to the various modes of fighting is very great throughout the province. But this gentleman trains them only for his own use. He has an even hundred in training on this estate, and something like a hundred on another. We passed rapidly round to look at the imprisoned duellists. Each had a commodious cell to himself. In general their combs are pared off close to the head; the proud ruff of feathers naturally round their neck was also shorn, and the feathers on the back of the bird, and the tail were cropped to two or three inches. The object of this mutilation is to prevent his adversary siezing him by the feathers, and shaking him like a dog. The parts thus laid bare both behind and before are constantly chafed with *arguadiante*, so that they are as red as his comb. Of some of them, the spurs were sharpened to a needle's point. Several of them had but one eye, the other having been lost in the pit. One of vast size was pointed out to us, with very blunt spurs. I was astonished to learn that this bird is trained to fight with a *razor*. The instrument is constructed of the keenest steel in the English manufactories; the blade is brought to a point, and the edge is as sharp as a barber's razor. It is formed with a hollow in the end, into which the spur of the bird is inserted and secured with a strap. Thus accoutred, the first spring and stroke, we were informed, is commonly decisive, and sometimes both fall dead together. In another row of cells we saw a tremendous fellow, who had within a week successfully fought his battle, and brought to his master twentyeight ounces with the loss only of one eye.

The principal building on this estate is in the condition of the house formerly beetling on Beacon hill in Boston, and seems in a fair way of coming to the same fate. The last season a large fragment of the dryer was precipitated almost perpendicularly into the valley below.

At length we reached the charming valley occupied by the Hermitage. There is nothing more romantic in fairy land. You pass between lime hedges, and under shades of the mango

tree, the almond tree, the beautiful bread tree, and palms, some of which are a hundred and ten or twenty feet high, and these not half the height of the wall of mountain which encloses a valley containing five or six acres. The bately is near the centre of the valley. There, on one side, stands a neat and tasteful house, darkened by the shade of fruit trees; and there the boheas, and the range of barbecues; and at the foot of the whole rushes by a considerable mountain river, just as it has tumbled down a precipice of one or two hundred feet. The plantation of coffee and plantain seems suspended around you from the bold wall of mountain just mentioned, like the gardens of ancient Babylon. On the tops of these lofty hills is a hedge of dwarf mangoes, which resemble the elegant sour orange cut into a globular form, so often employed to adorn principal avenues in the low country. The whole little scene is luxuriant and fruitful, from the centre of the valley to the top of the almost circular mountain.

As we passed up the narrow path overlooking the gorge, which confines the precipitous course of the river, we observed the force of the torrent, leaping from knob to knob, dashing before it everything but the solid rocks, which were converted to a chalky whiteness. But at this time a long drought having prevailed, the diminished current swept over the rocks with only a gentle murmur.

Without serious difficulty, dismounting a few times, we at length reached the bately of the Buena Vista. The name is strictly graphic of the charming spot. From this great height we looked north, and through a regular opening of mountains all the way, we could see distinctly to the port of Cardenas, and the neighborhood of Mariel; and in a clear day, I was told, even the fishing boats could be seen on the water. The distance is estimated at three leagues. We turned and looked southeast, to the waters of the Gulf of Mexico, and the Isle of Pines, which was easily distinguishable.

Looking directly south, we could see a very fine coffee estate

running up the north side of the saddle of Taboureta. If we had known the fact yesterday, we might, by making our way but a few rods down from the highest elevation we attained, have stood on the upper edge of this coffee field. Thus we could perceive that the rich soil we saw on the Taboureta is not confined to the summit, but extends far into the valley. My surprise is very great, the longer I am among the mountains, to find how exuberant they generally are in their natural and cultivated products. It is pretty evident, that the refugees from St Domingo were not without sagacity in selecting their ground. The soil was indeed rich, with the exception of some spots of coco; and though it is liable, where it is not very stony, to be gradually washed away, trees with care will flourish for twenty or thirty years, and yield a coffee in higher demand in the market than any other. The *provident* planter, however, has taken care to secure to himself more land than he wishes at once to occupy, and every year a crest of hill is reduced from a forest state, to plantation, so that while spots in very unfavorable situations become sterile, other new and very fruitful ones are coming on, to preserve complete the full number of fruitful trees.

We returned in early season to breakfast with the family at Santa Susana.

LETTER XLVI.

TO MRS E—— A——.

SANTA SUSANA, APRIL 27th, 1828.

A LITTLE after daybreak, with Messrs I. and H. D'W., I ascended from Santa Susana to the top of Monte Pelado, (the Shorn Mountain.) We rode three fourths of the whole height on horses, without once dismounting, in the foot alley among coffee. The path continually angles like a ship with an almost head wind, and turns to all points of the compass—it is cut into

the hill—coffee trees hang above you, and now and then a vigorous one almost elbows the horse over the precipice. Some of the coffee ground is so nearly perpendicular that the negro may with propriety say as does the sailor when rocking aloft—“one hand for my master, and one for myself.”

I was struck with the fact that these mountain plantations are well watered, in the midst of drought. Several living springs issue, at which the laboring negro may drink luxuriously of limpid water; and every large gorge between hills has its brook, which a half hour of mountain rain would cause to roar like a river. We arrived at a forest at about 650 feet above the garden, into which, at this position, a muscular arm might throw a stone, and here left the horses in care of a negro, and completed the ascent, 214 feet, on foot, and stood on a bald cone, with a breeze so brisk that I borrowed an additional coat of a servant to be warm.

We here stood, not on a conjectural, but accurately measured height, 1320 1-2 feet above the level of the sea, and not less than a hundred below Taboureta, in full view, one league and a half distant. There is a difference of opinion as to heights, however.

There was here an open horizon without an object to intercept our view, except the Saddle, and the ranges of distant mountains. The Cusco, S. W., of similar height with those of San Salvador. North, lay a ridge of mountains called Rubi, back of Santa Susana. This estate has 628 acres of land,—parts occupied twenty years, yielding little—new spots set with trees,—spots twenty years old decayed—ten, doing well—difficult to repair—there is a method by restoring to forests, but some spots on the Cusco are so washed of soil, that trees will scarcely take hold.

A little below Monte Pelado, in the forest, we discovered a wild pine with a beautiful red flower, on a large tree. Wishing to ascertain the manner in which this interesting parasite is propagated, we sent up a negro to bring down the plant. It has a

beautiful leaf, which I have before described to you, edged with very small thorns. They serve to convey water to the centre, which is a cupan and a half broad at bottom, and four at top, twelve inches deep, and containing according to an experiment made at the house, two quarts of water before it would leak over. It is evident this parasite is propagated by winged seeds, which the breeze flutters in the air like the thistle.

LETTER XLVII.

MRS A—— E—— G——.

SANTA SUSANA, APRIL 30th, 1828.

I HAVE been as busy as a beehive these eight or ten days, in these delightful mountains; and I have thought of you almost continually. You have just enthusiasm enough to gaze upon these cloud-capt hills, and down on these awful precipices, and to hang by a doubtful hold over some delightful abyss, and look and shudder, and shudder and look, uncertain whether is greater, the terror or the delight. Tomorrow at daybreak I descend to the level of common life, in the plain; but I cannot feel easy to leave the spot without a hasty letter to a child of nature, who always loved to thread her mazy walks, strewed with flowers, to explore her beaches to gather variegated and beautiful shells, and arrange them in glittering orders, and to enter the dark forest, and to mount the highest hills, and to step across the chasm, here and there found in our dear New England, from which less ardent companions timidly started back.

The delightful spot where I am commencing my fifth day, is the residence of Madame S. J., whose sons were classmates with our young friends R. and P. It is difficult to say whether the family are most amiable or most accomplished. There are here two sons and two daughters, the youngest ten, and all speak three languages, so far as I can judge, with about equal

facility. The mother has unusual powers of conversation. She was a lady of S. C., and has made this her principal residence more than twenty years; and her information is much to be relied upon, abundant and interesting.

The day after our arrival, (a son of —— was the companion of my journey, and a calesero of the Marquis of Ramus, our guide through the passes of the mountains,) two volantes brought three children of the Marquis, and their governess, an accomplished French lady, to pass the day. The young ladies at twenty and twelve speak the three languages; the youngest, who is very clever, speaks handsomely. Their instructress finds them constant employment, and the fruit of her care and instruction is evident in their manners and conversation. But I forbear—you may have observed in my correspondence this winter that I am much less personal than during my former absence; it is from the conviction, that, even where it is favorable to the individual concerned, ingenuous minds do not like to appear too much in detail in letters. A hundred anecdotes may be very proper in fugitive and evanescent conversation, which are questionable, put down in indelible ink.

Last night I slept soundly, and awoke at *the snap of the whip*. Do not be alarmed; it was merely the signal for the negroes' rising, used here instead of a bell; for other purposes the whip is very little used on this estate. I was soon abroad to look into a morning sky among the mountains, full of stars as brilliant as Venus. We are at a mansion, 456 feet above the level of the neighboring sea; of course are so much elevated out of the grosser atmosphere, that the skies have a purity and brightness very different from the champaigne of St Marks.

I found the business of the plantation was going on, while I could scarcely discern the first streaks of day on the mountains. A long row of negroes with each a basket on his head, was passing at the foot of the hills, like an army of bibiguas on a nocturnal expedition. I perceived too that wagons were loading at the glaciers or driers, with coffee, and wishing to see the

hardy Monteros, I repaired to the spot. The father, a stout man whose frame would do honor to a yeoman on the hills of New Hampshire, was standing in his great coat, to see that all was right. The son received the bags of coffee, as negroes brought them, and disposed them in his cart, guarded on every side, from the possibility of being wet with rain, by hides. The negroes came with each a bag of coffee on his head, weighing 100 lbs. and stood patiently under his burden till his turn came to be relieved. These Monteros interest me more and more. How hardy they are you may learn from the fact that three of them slept on a plastered pavement, one of the coffee driers, each in his shirt and trousers, the canopy of heaven only for his covering, bathed through the night with dew.

At half an hour before sun rising, four of us were mounted, and I commenced my fourth ascent of the mountains. The direction was farther east, and our various positions presented charming views of the batey, of the mountain turnpike of this estate, of various flourishing swells of coffee, and vales of plantain, and alleys of Guinea-grass. I often shrunk from the precipice over which I was hanging, towards the upward side, especially as my *more judicious horse* inclined to walk on the downward edge, lest a plantain or coffee tree on the other side should urge him over.

Our object was to visit the romantic estate of Mr Marcos Pitoletto, an Italian, who has a waterfall of 150 feet, and a cacao estate commenced among his coffee, which, I think, promises him wealth, as he is the first who has commenced the interesting culture on the island, to any extent, (with the exception hereafter mentioned.) I visited his cascade at the point where it makes its leap. A slight bank of one foot thickness detains the water for a bath, covered with palm leaves. In this bagnio of cold spring water you may sport, and might leap over the dam, and go down with the water a deeper plunge than the falls of Niagara. We thence descended into the valley, to see where the water dashes among the rocks. The proprietor calls the cascade, the Young Niagara.

The principal object of my visit was to see the cacao plantation. He has 20,000 trees in a flourishing condition, from two to eight years old. They are inserted among his coffee, and may serve the purpose of shade to that tender plant, and afford a rich crop in itself. The oldest trees are five or six inches in diameter, at the stem; and ramify regularly, and he allows only two strata of limbs to form the tree. They will become large trees, and live probably a hundred years. Mr P., who has been thirty years in the island, saw trees near Havana, brought to this country by the Marquis of Bianca, (or Beytia) and planted on his estate, which were about the age above mentioned, and were larger than the aguacati tree, large as our largest pears. This gentleman has proceeded cautiously in forming his cacao plantation, beginning with a few trees. He presented some of his cacao made into chocolate, to the Consulado, and it was found equal to the best from foreign parts; and he was offered two dollars more per quintal, on account of the superior *freshness and richness* it possesses, which makes it very suitable to be mixed with the foreign, which is dry. He informed us that in San Juan de los Remedios, much cacao is made for market. This beautiful tree, with large fair leaves, and flowers, which are small and white, and fruit which is five or six inches long, and eight or ten inches in circumference, both growing directly out of the body and limbs of the tree, grows equally well at the top of the mountain, and in the valley. It loves a northern aspect, and cool situations; requires no maturing; but will not grow on exhausted soil; yet most of his cacao is set in coffee fields twenty years old. But I forget I am not writing to an agriculturist.

You will not expect me to detail my other three ascents, as I have preserved them for you in MSS., nor to relate where I have been, and the hospitality and courtesy with which I am everywhere greeted. The time is now near, I humbly hope, through the great goodness of God my Preserver, when I shall embark for my ever dear country, and the spot in that country

most of all endeared to my heart by the affectionate friends who, I know, will soon stand on tiptoe and expand their arms to receive me. These mountains have done more for me than the plains. Three weeks I was too near the wet savanna skirting the South Sea, or Gulf of Mexico. St Marks did much to restore me from an ill turn which might, I think, have been a fever, if I had remained longer in that low neighborhood. But there is wonderful life in this mountain air. Let invalids that come to this fine island always seek its high grounds. It is almost sufficient to raise the hectic sufferer to tone and health.

This dear family have made me perfectly at home, and desired me to stay as long as I can. It is quite possible, if I cannot find a passage to Boston or Bristol, I shall embark with this family in two weeks for New York. They spend six months or a year on the continent. It is uncertain where,—and it is possible, I hope certain, that we shall have the pleasure to see them in B. Be assured, I am much improved in health, and shall hope to be able to labor in my vineyard at my return. Love to your dear mother, to whom she must consider this letter indirectly addressed, and love to my *treasures*, as Madame I. justly calls her children—and love to my neighbors, and flock—no *compliments* to any body.

LETTER XLVIII.

TO MRS E—— A——.

RECOMPENSA, MAY 1st, 1828.

WE left the mountains, and the society and hospitality we found there, with regret, and returned into the plain of St Mark's. The road was fine, even for a volante, down the hills; and near the foot of them we crosssd the principal river, which, I conjecture from its direction, must enter the bay of Mariel. There was considerable water, even in this dry time, in the

channel, and a plenty of small fish, which might amuse, perhaps reward, the angler. In the valley and on the diminished swells we found fine black soil, some tobacco and several sugar estates, one of them very large.

We entered a pretty village, with a large church in good repair, the late scene of Father ——'s labors, whose name is as fragrance in the mountains, and in the plains. The general character of the clergy of this country is reprobated by its population generally, without much difference in the degree of severity, on account of national or religious prejudices, or partialities. Whatever may be the moral character of the people of Cuba, they acknowledge the sacredness of the clerical office, and that those who sustain it should be as spotless as ermine. They are mortified and often indignant, where this is *not the case*; they regard it with veneration and enthusiastic affection *where they see that it is*. Two anecdotes of recent date, and both unquestionably true, will illustrate the fact. Father ——, who shall be nameless lest some officious reader who understands both languages should shock his modesty by translating the passage, (he does not understand a word of English,) was very sick. The news flew, and the deepest solicitude was universal. Some contributed every comfortable thing he could possibly want, and some watched by him day and night. But the circumstance most affecting was to see the humble Monteros of his flock hovering about his dwelling, and when the physicians came out, proffering their hard earned money to pay the fees, which, however, was refused.

Not far from this touching scene lived another Father of a very different character. Such were his vices, his abuse of office, and of confidence, and such his gallantries, that the strongest passions in the human breast were roused against him; and in the most public situation, as he was gaily stepping into the ball-room, a stroke from a dagger sent him to his great account. The assassin was known to the public authorities, but has not been punished.

Whatever other reflections may rise out of these anecdotes one thing seems perfectly plain, that even in Cuba there is high respect for the clerical character, when sustained in its purity, and indignant feeling when the sacred lawn is defiled. Every friend of the island will devoutly hope and pray, that this honorable feeling may be stronger and stronger, till the priesthood shall be purged of the openly vicious, and religion shall be revered in the holy lives of those who sustain its offices. When the example of all the ministers of religion shall be what that of some is, there will be less complaint of infidelity, and irreligion. Let the tonsure never be seen in the cockpit, nor at the gaming table, and the regular and secular clergy, like Cæsar's wife, not only be pure, but unsuspected, and that influence which they fear and complain is lost, will return to them; and in all the important events and high destinies before the island, they will be cherished and revered.

A part of this morning's ride reminded me of the beautiful hills and valleys of Heruco and Guanamacoa, adorned with innumerable palms. We were delighted with the gay plumage and fine notes of numerous birds. We passed many sitios and portreros, and were diverted with the ingenuity of several porters, who lay at their ease in their lodges, and opened and shut the gates without leaving their recumbent posture. As the porters are very grateful for a bit or a half bit, and commonly obtain it from the strangers they oblige, it is probable enough that they are lame or infirm through age, and perhaps incapable of rising. We passed through much soil good for sugar and coffee, and one sugar estate on red soil. We passed in sight, we supposed, of Cabanas, and saw the hills of Guana-joy; and looked back with mingled sensations of pleasure and regret on the mountains of San Salvador, and after seventeen miles travel arrived at the Recompensa to breakfast.

LETTER XLIX.

TO MRS E—— A——.

HACIENDA OF ST MARKS, MAY 3d, 1823.

THINKING I had an hour for writing, before the messenger was to start for Havana, I was coolly sitting down to give you an ample sheet, with interesting matter enough to fill a dozen, when suddenly I learn he goes in ten minutes. I hasten to say that yesterday we descended from the mountains, where I had been six days, the most conducive to health I have passed on the island. I am quite another thing from what I was when I wrote from the Reserva. I eat, sleep, exercise, write, think, inquire, amass matters of great interest, and have infinite occasion of gratitude to God for all his mercies. Truly I do now hope through his mercy soon to be with you, in good health and fine spirits. I shall keep in the country till almost the last hour before embarking, that I may run no risk from the city or bay. Every body here thinks that there can be no manner of danger in taking ship from that port.

There is the finest lace-factory in the mountains of San Salvador, from which I shall bring home a few specimens. Do you not think they are quite young to commence business of this sort? I send you a very small specimen in the letter, cut from a wide piece; more might occasion, thin as it is, a double postage. It seems a curious mode of weaving, but the threads are amazingly strong in the piece. A marquis of the island presented the king with a set of shirts frilled with it.

LETTER L.

TO MRS E—— A——.

LA RECOMPENSA, ST MARKS, MAY 4th, 1823.

YESTERDAY, with three or four minutes warning, I gave you a note, very short, but sufficient to apprise you where I am,

and how I am, and of my hopes and intentions for a fortnight to come. By a private mail I hope to send to the city tomorrow, and though it is late in the day, as I have given many of its hours to thought on important subjects, I shall indulge myself in an easy conversation letter to one who always listens to me with affectionate interest, especially when far away I address her with my pen.

This family, Dr M.'s, in which I have spent, I think, a fortnight or more, and shall probably remain a week longer, and should be welcome as long as I pleased, is a very delightful one. The Doctor is probably the most successful physician in the country, making a fortune rapidly, and held by all persons in high respect. He is exceedingly well informed, and judicious, and possesses colloquial powers. We have the pleasure to be well agreed on a great many subjects of importance, and have a great deal of comfort in my study together, whenever his press of business will permit. Mrs M. was the daughter of Col. T. the friend of Lafayette and Washington—speaking three languages with facility, as do her young children and their father.

Yesterday I was peculiarly fortunate in arriving from the mountains to breakfast, as the Doctor and lady had agreed to stand god-father and god-mother to a Spanish child, on a neighboring estate. They were delighted that I arrived in season for the baptism, which was to take place at noon. Seven of us from this family passed over in the volante. A considerable collection of well dressed people were present. Father ——— and clerk, or sacristan were there ; and his dress for the occasion was contained in a portmanteau.

Father ——— is the admiration of this part of the country, as a very correct and amiable man ; a character by the way, a good deal rare among the clergy of this island. He was in the church of Callejabos near the mountains, where I have been, and his name there is as fragrant oil poured forth. When he was sick, his house was beset by his parishioners to offer services, and the Monteros were seen offering fees to the physicians, as they left his apartment. Thence he has recently

been transferred to the parish of Atemisa, in the Partido of St Marks, and he is received with acclamation.

Father ——— robed himself in a black cassock; and over this he put a short muslin gown, with some nice needlework about it, or lace; and over this again he put a narrow mantle of brocade, trimmed with gold lace;—and stood by the font. The infant boy was presented by the god-parents; and, writing to a lady, she will wish to know how he was habited. Its under dress was of white satin. Over this was a robe of *lobinet* lace, trimmed with French lace, and ornamented with white artificial flowers. His cap was of the same fabric.

The service commenced with a short prayer in Latin. The god-parents then were required to repeat the Lord's prayer and creed in Spanish. The priest proceeded to make on the breast of the child, calling its name, Amelio, the sign of the cross, slightly blowing upon it, I suppose in token of conferring the Holy Ghost. He next put salt in his mouth, and anointed the forehead, the occiput or back part of the head, and behind the ears, giving to a protestant priest a lock of cotton to wipe off the oil in the several places. Water in which there was an infusion of salt, was then applied to the back part of the head, with a plate held under by the sacristan, to catch the falling water. The mother, in fidgets, as the child was crying, came to take him, probably thinking the ceremony was over. But the Father, with a frown on his amiable face, bid her go away. There was little more, however, but the benediction of *Dominus vobiscum*. The baptismal words and prayer being in Latin with Spanish pronunciation, I did not observe when those words were recited. I have been minute; for it is certainly difficult to see on what authority, but human, most of these circumstances are founded.

After the baptism a superb Spanish dinner was partaken in the hall, and after a recess from table of twenty minutes we sat down to a second table spread in the piazza, with a great variety of fruits and preserves. There was great decorum

throughout the afternoon, and but a single circumstance seen of those leveties common on these occasions. Once a child of five years came into the hall with a mask on of an old man, with bacchanalian cheeks. But this was hardly to be thought of as singular, in a country where baptisms are usually attended with dancing two or three days and nights, not to speak of gambling and junketing of the rudest appearance. I know not to what to impute the seriousness and decorum of this occasion, except to the purity and wisdom of Father ——— and the high character of the god-father and god-mother, all of whom may have dictated the manner in which things should be conducted.

Father ——— speaks only Spanish, and I have too much self-respect to attempt conversation in broken Spanish, or in Latin, ill understood on both sides on account of the monstrous difference in pronunciation. But much passed between us through Dr M. an admirable interpreter, through whose good feeling and ingenuity our respective thoughts appeared possibly even better than we expressed them in our respective vernacular tongues. I think on the whole, that this amiable clergyman, if not in talents, at least in other respects, would be venerated in Boston, as was the Archbishop of Bourdeaux, the accomplished Cheverus. If I were a suffragan, and the see of Havana was to be filled tomorrow, Father ——— should have my vote.

May 5th.—Today is Sunday, and Dr M. and myself in his volante went to church in Atemisa, Father ———'s church. Under his predecessor, this church was a mere barn, and unfrequented. It is already assuming a neat and respectable appearance. The walls are rude stone and mortar, and the roof as simple; but the altar is neat, and even elegant in all its simplicity. The exhibitions there protestant eyes cannot approve. There is a neat painting of the Virgin with the holy Infant in her arms, and in advance, a small figure of Christ crucified. These serve for Christmas and Easter.

Mass was closing as we entered. I saw the Father's man-

ner, however, was more grave and feeling than I have commonly witnessed, and his benediction was audible, and his prayers in less of a mumbling style. There were nearly as many worshippers in this small village church, as in Matanzas; but I was sorry to see that the cock-pit and billiard table were still better attended, as we passed them in service time.

Father ——— soon came to us from the sacristy, and gave us a very kind reception, and we walked over the green to his house. There were, probably, twenty of his congregation, male, female, old and young, in his hall, where they seemed to have gone, as to a levee, to pay their respects, and manifest their affection. I could not but notice the peculiar fervor of two gentlemen, in their salutations and adieus, and remarked to Dr M., "I should think that those gentlemen, from their warmth of manner, must have come from Callejabos," the parish from which he has been recently promoted, and a dozen miles distant. He stated to the Father my remark, who, with a delightful smile said, "*they were* his old parishioners of that place."

As we were now on pleasant terms in consequence of these successive interviews and conversations, I adventured to remark to him, "that my own pastoral affections were delightfully exercised this morning by more than a dozen letters from my family, and kind messages from my flock."

This brings me to acknowledge the long looked for, and anxiously desired packets from home—that of February 3d and 6th, and of March 30th and 31st, accompanied with a very kind letter from Dr H. They arrived in the evening after I had retired; and after consulting together, the excellent Doctor and wife concluded to let me sleep in ignorance till morning. Whether it was that I was very hungry, or that the viands were peculiarly fine, I cannot say—but it was the richest repast I have received in my absence. I could not but shed a tear over my loved parishioners, gone to their graves in my absence. I hope now soon to be with the mourners to speak a kind word

to them. O how grateful am I, or ought I to be, to God our common Preserver at home and abroad, that you are not mourning for the absent invalid, nor I for those who have been sick and in danger at home. I do hope that his great goodness will suitably affect us all. * * *

Every part of both packets have been deeply interesting—and some parts were honored, if you please, or soiled, if you choose, with tears. O how deeply I grieve at the state of religious war so disgraceful to our land. Would to God I had strength to breast the tempest—or rather, to do something to hush the troubled waves to holy rest. Well,—may God in his mercy, to my dying hour, preserve me from the fiery elements of religious controversy. Why will they not remember Paul's words, "*Though I have all knowledge, and understand all mysteries, and have not charity, I am nothing.*" Love, love, with its sweet and heavenly fruits, is religion. But what is the fruit of all this tumult, but hatred, envy, and passions such as the great adversary delights to see in the flocks of Christ. O let my dear family, and my beloved flock, keep themselves cool and unscorched from the conflagration around them.

As I believe in substance I mentioned in my note of yesterday, I expect to remain in this endeared and intellectual family a few days more; and then pass a few promised days on the estate of Mr F. And when the exact moment and opportunity shall come, I hope to slip up to Havana, and embark without lingering in that always critical spot. Managed in the way I intend, all my friends think there is, humanly speaking, no danger. * * *

I hope to bring some entertainment in notes taken in my wanderings about this most interesting island. I am astonished that so very little has been told of Cuba. I can hardly account for it. Every body has been anxious to learn; nobody to teach. It is an island in some of its most important points, literally unknown to foreigners. But I have done, and with love to my family, my flock, and my country, (with all its faults, I love it still,) I am, &c, &c.

LETTER LI.

TO MRS E—— A——.

ST MARKS, MAY 6th, 1828.

* * *

DR L. V. dined with the family today. He was educated in Philadelphia and Paris, and speaks the three languages with perfect facility and correctness. He has been much about the island, and is well informed. Coffee succeeding less well than in better times, last season he made an attempt in tobacco; but with a total failure for want of rain. He confirms what I have had from many, that the district of the island lying west from the Cusco mountains is the region for tobacco. It is watered with little rivers, and on their banks, overflowed, and containing a fine alluvial deposit, grows the fine tobacco of the island.

This gentleman thinks it is usually the case, that begas are taken by bargain with the proprietors of the ground; not rudely, by driving stakes; yet he states that there are lawsuits now pending between the cultivators and owners of the haciendas. But as that whole region is chiefly in grazing, a mode of improvement yielding a moderate profit, the proprietors are glad to lease begas, and to give with the tobacco spots some other lands without rent to raise plantain and necessities for the laborers. A friend of my informant has paid \$850 rent for 33 acres of bega; but he was not reluctant to pay the sum, as he obtained \$7000 worth of tobacco; and even this was but an ordinary crop. In cultivating a bega of this extent, twenty negro laborers are necessary; and it is necessary also that they be instructed in the business, as it requires some judgment and care. White laborers are more efficient and judicious than black.

If the object is to cultivate the finest tobacco, they set out 300,000 plants on a caballeria. This brings them within a foot and a half of each other, and the plants placed so near together,

grow in smaller and thinner leaves. If the object be to grow tobacco for the foreign market, Old Spain, Holland, &c, where strength is sought for rather than fineness, 150,000 plants occupy the ground ; and the trees grow large, and the leaves thick. The result, as to profit, is about the same in both cases.

The best tobacco in the world is raised on the San Juan y Martinez. But all the rivers west of the Cusco mountains form excellent tobacco land ; even the banks of the mineral river San Diego. There is no want of excellent land in that section of the island for this culture. It is at present in haciendas, and covered with cattle ; but enterprise might convert it into a rich garden, yielding \$25 to \$30 per acre to the owner, and \$212 per acre to the cultivator, per annum. From respectable authority I learn, otherwise I should be incredulous as to so extravagant a fact, that the late Seniors Pedrosa, who died in Havana, between ninety and a hundred years of age, left as a part only of her real estate, ninety-nine haciendas between the Cusco and Cape San Antonio.

The state of health and of society in that part of the island seems to have been a discouragement in the way of its settling and culture. I am led to believe that the first objection has been magnified. There is a boggy skirt to the south coast of the island, from the port of Batabano to Cape Antonio. At certain seasons mephitic vapors must exhale from this border of fresh water and mud ; but probably no more than in the thick settled districts in its neighborhood in St Marks and Guanima.

I am satisfied that all along that wet border, there is a greater liability to disease, than in a more central situation between the coasts. It cannot however be called very sickly.

If there be more deaths nearer to the cape, may it not be imputable to the want of physicians, and the irregular lives of many of the inhabitants ? I have not the least doubt, from analogy, that among the mountains which lie on the northerly side of the island, it is healthy ; and on them and among them the finest and purest air in the world.

The state of society is bad enough. It has been the resort and hiding place of pirates and wild negroes. The first of these, those desperadoes who for a while crimsoned the neighboring waters with the blood of unarmed men, have been effectually suppressed. The latter are watched, and sometimes caught by the police of the government. There is little robbery, it is said, on the land, because there is little property in a tangible form to excite cupidity. Emigrants of good character might soon give a new complexion to the society of that region. Two thirds of the population is, without doubt, white; and among the Monteros it is good news to hear that small schools are commencing.

On the whole it is questionable whether any section of this heaven-favored island offers richer promise to industrious, and skilful, and enterprising men, than the district from the Cusco to Cape Antonio.

* * *

It is the opinion of Mr G. that sugar estates *only* are liable to be speckled with begas;—said to be a new regulation, extending its influence from Candelaria to Cape Antonio.

* * *

There is a practical evidence, (says A. J.) of the fact that persons may go into a hacienda and take up tobacco. Two young French gentlemen have been to the leeward, and found persons to the number of a hundred on begas, paying no rent to the owners of the land, it being considered as the king's, and sold or given under the condition that the tobacco land should remain at his disposal. One individual can take up land enough only for 100,000 plants of tobacco.

* * *

The rivers of this island are considered so far royal or public property, that eight yards on each side is not considered subject to the control of the proprietor through whose lands they run. He is liable to the serious inconvenience of a squatter, to use a descriptive term* of our own country, who may erect his ranchos

on the bank where he pleases, like the tobacco planter, provided he does it with the design or pretence of fishing.

LETTER LII.

TO MRS E—— A——.

ST MARKS, MAY 7th, 1828.

* * * *

THE best time to ride for health in Cuba, is not before sunrise, as the air has a night chilliness or dampness ; but immediately after the sun appears. By seven o'clock the sun is too hot, except riding under shade. The forest is the most delightful for the morning ride, both because the shade is thickest, and the variety of beauty and grandeur is almost infinite. Guardarias of a coffee estate are delightful, being one extensive saloon, hung with the richest of nature's green damask. The palms are beautiful, but have nothing but their single tuft of feathers at top to shade you, and that is sometimes fifty feet high ; a hundred, if you ride among them in the portrero.

At sunrise this morning I took my ride through two coffee estates belonging to the Marquis of Ramos. These are remarkable for certain squares which seem to have been intended for malls or shaded walks. Young mangoes were set so thick in rows that beneath their shade it seemed twilight. A great part of his estates was fenced in by a lofty and unshorn hedge of bamboos.

The batey was neat rather than splendid. His house was low, and the piazza cool, with venetian blinds. A parterre, gay with flowers, adorned the approach to the house ; and through the driers and garden, the avenue leading to the house was striped with grass, grateful to the eye, and some relief from the reflected heat of the ground and driers, which in most bateys is almost intolerable after ten o'clock. It is a spot which cannot

be relieved by shade, as the sun and air must have their utmost power on the driers. What is wanting, however, for the pedestrian and the cavalier on the bately, is fully made up to them in the mango malls for the one, and for the other in the guardarias of this superb tree which intersect the estate in two directions.

From the estate of the Marquis, I passed into that of Madame V., in which I found corn almost in New England style ; some among coffee, some entirely by itself. A shower had brightened the foliage of that beautiful plant, and gangs were employed in giving it a small sugar-loaf hill, that it may *stand the winds* without falling. It is, however, bad philosophy, whether in Cuba or New England. Nature sustains all standard plants without props. We erect no mound to sustain the oak or the apple-tree ; nor is a hill needed for the slender stems of English grains ; why then for the Indian corn ? Nature is at special pains to sustain this valuable plant. The elastic roots are sent out in sundry radiations one below another in every direction, and they run from eight to twelve feet. These are under-ground aids, to keep the plant erect, as well as channels to minister food and moisture for the growth of the plant. Is it wise, then, to interfere with nature, and come with the hoe and plough when the plant is tasselling, and sever the principal aids and conductors of aliment when the plant most needs them ? As well might we hope to save the mast by cutting the shrouds, and, I could almost say, promote the health of the animal by parting the esophagus. The plant lives, it is true ; because *some* of the roots are left. But it would flourish even in a dry time, if the caterers of dew had been spared. I have observed two fields in my own country, in a very dry time, conducted on different principles ; my own field was weeded rather than moulded or hilled ; and if the plants rolled their leaves in the day time, the roots nearest the surface of the ground cooled them with the dews of the night. The other field was ambitiously and neatly hoed into semi-globes ; and its plants were rolled up night and day.

On this estate there is a superb palm guardaria. The palms are all of a height, and each row is flanked by a beautiful row of oranges.

In passing up the public road to the small village of Las Canes, I observed two beautiful objects, such as I had not seen before among the infinitely diversified beauties of nature and culture in this vast garden of St Marks. Within a lime hedge was a shaded walk, formed by a row of lofty mangoes in the centre, and a row of orange trees on each side. The effect of the plan was to form a triangular or roof-like bank of the richest foliage, extending a mile along the high way. The other beautiful object was six rows of palm trees, as beautiful as Jericho.

May 8th, at sunrise, mercury at 69°. On a pleasant caballito, the nag of the Senorito of the family, who with saddle, whip, and spurs, exactly proportioned to his size, plays the caballerito at six years of age, I took my morning ride. I observed that the beautiful Mamey of St Domingo seems ambitious of dividing, I hope no tree will ever supplant, the honors of the Royal palm. I rode about a half mile under the shade of these trees, which, as I have before remarked, considerably resemble the *Magnolia Grandiflora*. Some of the trees were in blóssom, and some hung with ripe fruit. The blossom is small, stiff, half open like a rose, and resembling ivory ; and the fruit is round, of a russet skin, and varying in size from that of an orange, to that of the shattuck.

The highway lay along a superb forest, so thick with trees and *bajuca* that I could not penetrate it before I came to a rude path. This I pursued till it was so crossed and interrupted by every species of growth that I turned back. I could have spent the day in these shades, this natural museum, with delight. I have often observed in Cuba woods a parasite, whose large green beautiful leaf resembles a species of water lily. It shoots its red roots into the bark of some large tree, near the ground, and spreads them out like the sealing-wax veins of a skelêton in a medical museum ; and it runs its vine, an inch in diameter,

round trunk and limb to the top. I was fortunate this morning in seeing its beautiful flowering bud, a cone of 3 1-2 or 4 inches long, which I think promises a very beautiful flower. I left it, hoping to return and see it expanded. I saw a Quiebra Hacha of magnificent size with the bajuca embracing it from bottom to top ; and by their equal tops and the thriftiness of all their parts, it should seem that the union is friendly, not hostile, as heretofore remarked. But it is amusing to see in so close an embrace plants of a nature so entirely different.

LETTER LIII.

TO MRS E—— A——.

MARIEL, MAY 9th, 1828.

HAVING spent more than five weeks in ranging over this most populous, most cultivated, and most productive section of the island, lying between the village of San Antonio and the mountains of San Salvador, more than thirty miles square, there were still remaining two objects which I was anxious to accomplish, before I embarked for New England ; to have a sectional view of the island from south to north, and to visit the port of Mariel.

There are three or four miles of marsh savanna skirting the southern waters, which it was not convenient to penetrate ; but I had been quite to its border. With three miles more I was quite familiar. Through the kindness of a most obliging friend who accompanied me, we commenced our route at the sixth mile, and nearly in a straight line crossed the island to Mariel. We started as the morning bells, twenty within hearing, rung four : and in two hours and three quarters the fleet mules delivered us at the tavern in Mariel, eighteen miles ; thirty minutes having been spent in stops at the most interesting points of observation. The road was as good as a turnpike, a single mile excepted. Very little of this distance was in a state of nature.

The soil was all good, and most of it of a superior quality, as we could perceive by its luxuriant productions of every kind. We passed three small villages, and within a mile and a half of Guanajoy, one of the largest of the interior towns. We noted twelve coffee estates on the road, most of them extensive ; two large sugar estates, three more were in sight ; two begas of tobacco, one of ten acres, and the other of two ; seven large portreros, or pastures for cattle, two of them very large, in one of which my friend judged he had seen three hundred cattle at a time ; forty sitios, or Montero farms of small extent ; and nine taverns. The number of sitios is probably far short of what should have been counted, as the buildings by which we numbered them are often at a distance from the road, and sheltered by trees, and concealed entirely by intervening woods or hedges, or patches of plantain. Some of the sitios had extensive fields of corn, we judged ten or fifteen acres in a body, and almost as tall as that in New England. The largest, and heaviest, and most forward coffee I have seen was on this route. Almost every rood of the fields we passed in rapid succession was covered with some luxuriant growth, that made me think of the richest spots of alluvial soil on the banks of American rivers.

The crop of tobacco had been gathered ; what remained was chiefly for seed, and between the rows was growing a fine crop of beans. The taverns for the distance are fewer than it is usual to see. The villages were those of Las Canes, Laguiria, and Taberna Nueva. In the first are churches ; in the last, I believe none. We passed a large ceyba in the way, into whose top, sixty or seventy feet high, my friend had seen a hundred, or a hundred and fifty Guinea hens rise in a cloud, frightened by dogs. This fine domestic bird is so wild and shy on many estates, as to be taken only by the gun or snare.

It may furnish a valuable hint to coffee planters, as, so far as I have observed, it is a new method, and very easily practised, to remark that we saw a beautiful field of young coffee trees, shaded by young plants of Palma Christi. The shades were

set row and row with the coffee, and were a little taller, and extended their broad leaves over their nurslings, with just enough of sun and shade to render them flourishing. One league and a half from Mariel, the soil is black and deep. At a league distance, we came to a precipitous hill, by estimation thirty or forty feet high, where the soil was black and thin, and the sub-soil white coco.* We soon had a view of the sea and a spread of sail between two hills. After ascending considerable hills, we were surprised with a most enchanting prospect of Mariel. We sent forward the volante to the foot of the hill, and remained on the crest, where *the eye could not be satisfied with seeing*.

From this lofty eminence on the eastern side of the town and bay, estimated by intelligent persons in the town and by ourselves at from 300 to 360 feet, I incline to the smaller altitude, we have an uninterrupted view of the bay and town, and of a fine swell of land occupied by sugar estates between the bay and the ocean. The entrance into the bay is one mile broad, protected by a small fort on each side. The bay extends nearly from N. E. to S. W. a league, and is a large league broad. In the upper part of the bay is an islet; and a natural mole extends from the west land into the bay, at or near which is an embarcadero. There are several beautiful indentations to the bay, one at the west end, and another at the east end, behind the town. Half way between these, the river Mariel enters the bay with a considerable volume of water; another smaller river, which I conjecture is that which runs through Guanajoy, enters not far from the eastern indentation.

You look west over the bay and see a beautiful swell of land, on the top of which is a sugar estate; the white funnel of the boilers I took for a beacon, and have no doubt it answers for one to mariners on the coast. A second small bay runs parallel with that of Mariel, about two miles, and lies northwardly of it, and might be united with it by a short canal. Looking twelve

* What they call coco in Sumidero is red, in St Marks white, as I believe, but I am not quite certain.

miles to the southwest, you see the charming mountains of San Salvador in fine profile, and in the rear of them more distantly, as a sort of flank work you see a part of the Cusco range, stretching farther to the westward. You turn and look east, and the heights of Guanajoy are within two leagues. And in all these directions there is high cultivation, and a vast produce prepared for the market. Such is the outline of the perspective.

Now look at the foot of this bold and romantic hill, and you see the town of Mariel spreading itself out on a crescent peninsula, which extends nearly a third of the distance across the bay. Twenty sail of vessels lay at the wharves, or near them, between the horns of this new moon. Streets are laid out with tolerable regularity ; and houses, and shops of goods, and large stores connected with wharves, and extensive cooperages, some on the concave, but most on the convex side of the peninsula, compose a pretty town. Inquiring the number of houses, the answer given us by different respectable men varied from 150 to 200. But there is room for thousands below the hill, and for ten thousands on its charming summit.

As we descended by a well made but precipitous road, we came to the spot where an accident had not long since occurred, which, better than words, will tell the boldness of the declivity. A team in ascending with a heavy load, was working a traverse from side to side of the path, when one of the oxen lost his foothold and hung by his rope over the precipice ; and the driver to save the rest of his team cut him clear, and he was found dead at the foot of the precipice.

We met wagons ascending the hill with hogsheds of fish ; and it seemed like meeting a countryman, to see "Boston" branded on the casks. At about half the descent was a Montero settlement, with two hundred hives of bees, and a grove of plantain. In a few moments we alighted at a tavern in the neighborhood of the wharves, and refreshed ourselves on beautiful fish, just out of the water, and vino tinto, the morning beverage of the country.

After brief refreshment and rest, we examined the principal things on the peninsula. We passed neat shops in the style of Havana and Matanzas ; but hastened to the wharves. A large share of the sugar and molasses business was in the hands of one merchant ;* and to him, well known to my friend as deserving confidence, and mentioned with great respect in the village, we were indebted for the following information :—That fifty sugar estates send their sugar and molasses to this harbor, thirtyfive of them to his establishment ;—that more than thirty coffee estates send their produce to this harbor ;—that from three to four hundred barrels of honey per annum are sent to Mariel, and much tobacco—and if it were a port of entry for foreign vessels, the amount of merchandise would be vastly greater ;—that he has lived in this port twentyfour years, and has never known a case of yellow fever that had its origin here ;—that a vessel arrived in this bay from Pensacola, with the captain and all the men sick, who all recovered ;—that the trade wind ordinarily sweeps up the bay in the morning, and the land breeze down the bay in the evening ;—that the water is nine feet deep at the wharf, three hundred feet from the principal corner of business, and eighteen feet a little farther into the bay.

Many of the fevers of the West Indies among seamen are occasioned by toil in the hot sun. As it regards the heaviest article of export, molasses, at Mariel this is prevented. The muleteers bring it into town in small casks, which are emptied into a triangular trough, from which it passes over a strainer and falls into a tank fiftytwo feet long, sixteen and a half broad, and nine deep. It is pumped out of the tank into a duct, and running three hundred feet, fills the casks in the vessel without labor to the people. A pipe can be filled in two minutes.

Such are the natural advantages of the port of Mariel—perfectly safe for seamen of all countries. There is nothing but a slight elevation of land at the N. E. to prevent the trade wind

* Don G—— G——.

sweeping up the bay, and nothing to arrest its course between the heights of Guanajoy, and the mountains of San Salvador, to the Gulf of Mexico. The land breeze in turn sweeps back again over the same waters to the mouth of the bay. The ventilation is almost as regular as that of the hall of the Sultan by the oriental fan.

If the winds should not entirely cleanse the bay, the rivers here, as in the bay of Matanzas, come to their aid. In winter they may not do much, but when the summer rains come rushing from a thousand gorges of the San Salvador and Guanajoy, and swell the rivers to foaming torrents, the bay of Mariel must be sufficiently agitated and cleansed. The sun is now intensely hot, but so brisk is the breeze up the bay, that the water is crested with foam, and at midday we are walking the streets and wharves, the high ground and beach of the peninsula, buttoning our coats snug to be comfortable. Returned from the walk to the tavern, I am writing with a great coat on my shoulders, and am but comfortable.

This description would not have been run into such minuteness, did I not consider great interests involved in the subject. As an American, as a resident in a maritime town, very many of whose sons have been sacrificed to the miasma of the bay of Havana, I feel a personal interest in the subject. It is to be hoped that the king, and the authorities of the island, will regard the voice of humanity, and make this admirable bay a port of entry. There are important interests nearer home which deserve consideration. The neighborhood of this port is like the banks of the Nile for fertility, and like a garden for the perfection of its culture. It seems due to the planters, by making Mariel a port of entry, to relieve them from the alternative of an expensive land carriage of their heavy produce to Havana, or a double shipment to bring it to market. A relief from this tax, which brings nothing to the public treasury, would be gratefully received, and render them more able, and more cheerful, to pay the reasonable demands of government. This tax is no

trifling affair. A very intelligent planter and careful calculator states, that a coffee estate in St Marks, that sends 100,000 lbs. to Havana, pays \$1000 for cartage to the city, and bringing necessary articles for the plantation in the return cart. Six hundred dollars of that sum might be saved by sending to Mariel; and if he has a portrero, by using his own oxen and men, two hundred more might be saved. So that the tax in consequence of keeping the port of Mariel shut, to a second rate planter is \$800, and to some in the district 16 or \$1800 per annum. If this calculation be thought sanguine, it must be substantially correct; what then is the amount of this exorbitant tax on the whole district within ten miles of Mariel?

Ten years ago his Majesty saw the propriety of the measure, and gave orders accordingly; but they were not executed, or if the port was opened, it was soon again shut. Every succeeding year, by extending the surface of cultivated ground in the neighborhood, and accumulating the mass of production, renders the disappointment of the planters more keenly felt. More than 3000 coasting vessels are employed in carrying the growth of the country to Havana; most of them must run on the leeward coast. The flourishing city of Matanzas has not so much agriculture in its neighborhood as Mariel.

In our walk on the peninsula, we observed a broad sheet of water between us and the western shore of the bay. Where the two rivers come into the bay there is the usual mangrove border, but it does not extend far, and is too remote from the town to be injurious or offensive.

The extremity of the peninsula is occupied as a burial ground; and as there seemed to be a church in its neighborhood, we extended our walk to see them. The church was a pretty extensive building; but to our surprise filled with sugar. We could see by the form and apertures that it was intended to have been a house of God, but had been converted to a house of merchandise. We passed through the store with a civil recognition of the attendant, and discovered in the piazza a

small apartment, perhaps twelve feet square, partitioned off, and the exclamation of Jacob over the door—" *Hoc est nihil aliud, quam Domini domus.*" The court of the Gentiles was certainly much the largest part of the temple, and, I fear, more frequented than the "holy of holies."

The burial ground is an enclosure of about three rods square ; and just over its slight hedge was a Golgotha, a vast mass of human bones, bleached, and mouldering in the sun.

LETTER LIV.

TO MRS E ——— A ———.

LAS CANES, MAY, 1828.

IN returning from Mariel, we were diverted from our morning route a couple of miles, and visited the village of Guanajoy. A small river runs through the town, and is much frequented by both sexes for bathing. Some spots are excavated to deepen the water, and some have a screen of palm bark that the bathers might be retired. Ladies of good appearance were seen taking their walk to the water. This village is supposed to contain 7000 inhabitants ; but I should judge that it is overrated. The streets are paved rudely. Some of the houses are handsome ; they have a plaza with a church on one side, and the tasteful establishment of a marquis on the other. Handsome barracks have been erected in the town, and a considerable body of troops occupy them to preserve the peace of the neighborhood. Three companies were on drill as we walked over the green, and through the halls of the barracks. The square which they inclose is without the comfort of a single shade ; and the pavement and buildings are of a chalky whiteness, and some of the soldiers on drill were in long cloth coats and heavy caps ; circumstances which I should think would occasion in this climate frequent detachments to the springs of San Diego. The upper

lip of the soldiers is in a state of nature, and the beard arches over the mouth like a penthouse.

There was some degree of disappointment in regard to this important village, of which I had heard much. I had in imagination connected the town with the heights in its neighborhood, which bear the same name. Those heights I had often seen in the distance from the tops of the San Salvador, towering like pyramids on the plains of Egypt. I thought the populous village might have been placed on table land, or at least on some fine swell, raising it far above the champaigne neighborhood.

The village site has secured none of the advantages alluded to, except those of a small river which supplies water for ordinary uses, and affords facilities and encouragement to general bathing. But it deserves honorable mention for the attention here paid to education. There are at least three full schools in the place for boys, and some for girls. We had the privilege of passing a half hour in one of the schools, and perceived there was excellent order and attention to study. The common branches of elementary education were attended to, as most of the pupils, exceeding forty in number, were small. Writing makes a conspicuous figure in this, as in all Spanish schools. They write on half sheets curiously prepared by a stamp which determines height, distance, and parallelism with perfect accuracy. Lads of eight might be called good writers. A part of the school were studying their lessons in small manuscript; probably suitable school books in that branch were not to be had.

We left Guanajoy about five o'clock, and were at Las Canes at vespers, after travelling forty miles in the day, on a *turnpike road*, excepting gates, and surveying a section of the island of a most interesting character. Not, indeed, by chain, but by satisfactory measurement, we find the island twentyseven miles broad from south to north, at a hundred and fifty miles distance from Cape San Antonio, and twentyseven from Havana. It is six miles from the water's edge to Cafetal La Emprcssa, from

which we started; eighteen miles thence to Mariel; and, as we were informed, three miles to the sea, over and beyond the bay.*

LETTER LV.

TO MRS E—— A——.

ST MARKS, MAY 11th, 1828.

You probably are thinking me just ready to embark for New England, and here I am almost fifty miles from Havana. I indeed intended to have been at San Antonio, nearer to the city, by this time, ready to take advantage of circumstances. I have not hurried, because it is somewhat sickly in Havana, and also because I have objects engrossing my attention, which I trust may be of some importance to the family, and because I am fully sensible it might be injurious to my cough to arrive in B. before the 1st of June. To relieve you from all suspicion, however, that I am not as well as I have been, I state distinctly that I am better. I rise very early and ride; and often ride again in the evening, and carefully avoid hot suns. The weather and climate thus humored, are delightful beyond your conception. In the morning the mercury is at 65 to 70, and 80 to 82 or 84 at 2 o'clock. The air is fragrant and elastic; horses as easy as cradles; friends highly intelligent and devoted; things to be seen interesting and important; and if my manuscripts, well filled, do not bring you information entirely new, and entertainment to friends so partial, I shall be disappointed. I believe I may uprightly say, that I know as much as almost any man of a section of the country 160 miles from sea to sea, and from east to west. * * * * I early fixed my objects, and I have kept them constantly in view, and every day and

* It is therefore much too loosely said by Huber that the island is twelve to fourteen leagues broad in the narrowest part.

hour now appears very important while I remain on the island. There have been distinguished Americans here who, on account of the great debility of some, or the suspicions which attached to others as political men, saw very little of the island. There is scarcely a spot on the globe so interesting. Yet except the mere skirt of the island, seen from the deck of a vessel, and Havana, and Matanzas, and St Jago de Cuba, and Principe, little has been known of its interior to Americans or Europeans. There is, notwithstanding, the greatest thirst for information. Letters have come from the Western country, soliciting from a distinguished gentleman on the island information by letter. There is not less eagerness in the Atlantic states. And why there has been no one to collect and diffuse information, cannot be accounted for but on the score of dangers to a foreigner. It is not without good cause that men go armed; and in despite of arms, disasters are frequent; and if American editors could draw from Cuba springs, the horrors in their columns would be multiplied a thousand fold. I have been sometimes a little nervous; and my friends are very careful to extend protection to me in town and country. But my security lies chiefly in my peaceful character, and discreet conduct, and in divine protection. Havana is a place so profligate, that really I do not wish to pass more than one night there, and even that I will avoid if I can.

I can never be grateful enough for the respect shown me on this island by foreigners and Spaniards, by laymen and by clergymen. Except from Matanzas to Havana, I have never wanted horse or volante free of expense, to go short or long excursions, for a day or for a week, and gentlemen of standing, and of two or three tongues, to attend me. This is no ordinary degree of courtesy, and interest to promote my objects, and my safety, and comfort. It surpasses Carolinian hospitality. I ought to see in it something more than a human hand, even His, who turns the hearts of men whither He will.

This very dear family seems almost like home. They enter

fully into all my feelings and plans, and contribute to the gratifying and accomplishing them in every way they can.

If God shall prosper me, I shall hope to see you all by the beginning of June. * * * I have no time to add much. Love to the dear family of D.'s, whom I can never forget for all their thoughts of kindness for me and mine. Love to the family, and to all who ask.

LETTER LVI.

TO MRS E ——— A——.

ST MARKS, MAY 8th, 1828.

AT seven o'clock I returned to a further entertainment of a different sort,—from that ugliest of reptiles, the scorpion. A negro brought one of monstrous size, and of that inky hue which looks most wicked and revolting. He had seized him by the tail, and he hung dangling and hissing, but harmless. A bottle was soon prepared, and the prisoner was clapped into gaol. Not thinking he ought to be hung for his ugly looks, and wishing to adopt modern humane improvements with regard to incarceration, we gave him a good breakfast on a cockroach. The cockroach when put in, kept at as respectful a distance as possible; but when shaken downwards, the scorpion made a pass at him and struck off a leg. He took better aim the second time, and thrust in his dagger under his wing, which put him in slight convulsions, the mere trembling of the muscles after life is gone. He instantly seized his prey by the throat or tongue, we could not decide which. We proceeded to observe the epicure with a microscope, which developed a curiosity of mechanism, which we had not suspected. His back resembled that of a turtle, and on it was a little eminence, and on each side a speculum, no doubt to answer the purpose of eyes in that part. The animal had done banqueting on the blood of the

cockroach, and was eagerly partaking of the *solids*. The glass was somewhat imperfect, but we thought we could not be deceived in regard to the following facts:—The scorpion has two distinct heads, which he thrusts out from under a sort of tortoise shell, and both conspire in the business of devouring. His mandibles resemble a hawk's beak, the upper part being quite as much hooked. With these means, which appeared, in their magnified state, truly savage, he was soon gorged with his food, and left the relics in disgust, as we could not incite him to renew his meal.

A lusty Montero came in while we were examining the scorpion, and exclaimed, snapping his fingers, "Better crush his head than carry him to America;" and drew his ivory-handled knife from the sheath for the purpose. He took a particular fancy to the stranger; hoped he would settle in the island, and have a sugar or coffee estate, and would make him his mayoral—he had served Condes and Marquises in that capacity. If I would not settle here, he proposed going with me to America, and asked if I had a coffee estate, or a sugar estate, there?

In return for his civilities, I inquired how many children he had. "Ten," was his answer; but that "he had lost one, as the boy had *married*." "No," I replied, "you have gained another daughter." He boasted of one boy at seventeen who was strong enough to throw his father over the hedge. "But how do you keep such stout boys in order in your family?" He snapped his fingers and said, "By correcting them as long as they need it; and when they are whiskered, and think to have a will of their own, or are reluctant to submit to the order of the house, it is time for them to pack out of it."

The *scorpion* once more. This ugly reptile inspires considerable terror on this island, and inflicts a temporary pain of great severity. The first sensation from the wound is as if a needle, some have said a rusty nail, were thrust into the part. Several of the servants of this family have been stung, and recently Mrs D'W. In the case of the servants, stung in the hand,

the arm and shoulder were much affected ; a sort of paralysis took place, and the finger stung was swollen to nearly twice its ordinary size, and was very stiff ; and in two of the cases, a swelling rose on the body, under the arm, as large as a pigeon's egg.

The remedy resorted to is for a person immediately to clasp the arm till a cord is bound round it, and then apply garlic or lime juice to the wound ; but the most effectual application is the animal itself, crushed, or laid open with a knife. The limb, stung by a *small* scorpion, is better in a couple of hours ; and, by a large one, it is numb and useless for the first day, convalescent the second, and well the third.

It seems to me most probable on the whole, that there is no poison in the case, but an extraordinary lesion of the parts penetrated by the crooked dagger, accompanied with extreme pain. If this be the fact, the cording of the arm is certainly useless, if not worse.

One month ago, the planter on this estate discovered a very large female scorpion in his magazine, and secured her in a glass vessel, neither party being injured. Twentyfive days after, (1st of May,) she was discovered with a young family in the corked bottle, so numerous that it was difficult to count them. It is said that the young live on the living flesh of the mother. They are disposed all over her back, as thick as they can be stowed. Now and then one, like the smallest pig of a litter, is crowded off by his lustier brothers and sisters, and scrambles over the backs of the rest to find a birth. As the captive was originally intended for the American virtuoso, and has been transferred to his disposal, we shall have a fair opportunity of deciding the fact, whether the tender mother, with a deadly weapon in her tail, yields herself as food to her unnatural children.

At present, I see all the parties as quiet and contented as in similar cases between parent and young. The mother folds back her sting, that she may not wound her offspring, and seems

to caress them with the smooth termination of her body. And on the other hand I see no corrosion of the body by the young. The shoulder of one of her lobster-like claws oozes with a white matter. I suspend judgment, certain now that facts must speak a clear language. * * * *

13th May, Mr ——— had given her one cockroach, and said she would refuse food till it should be eaten up. She had nothing more till today. Three or four days I have suspected that the mother has been feeding on her children. Little white gristle has made its appearance in the bottle, which I take to be substance of the skeleton. Still I can discover no corrosion of the mother, and no lack of vigor. This day I put in a cockroach, and he was powerfully assailed by her, either out of fear for her children, or from hunger. She soon transfixed him with her sting, at the same time clenching his throat with one of her claws, and commenced the work of devouring with her heads. It seems now likely to turn out that the children are not parricides, but that the mother is an infanticide, rather than suffer hunger.

Scorpions are prone to haunt houses, store-rooms, and hollow trees; and often stow themselves snugly in the space between the loosened palm leaf and the trunk from which it is about to fall. They seem particularly to delight to bed and board in a guano roof. Where this happens to cover the hall, the piazzas and bed-chambers, of the mansion, which is often the case, and there is nothing to intercept the fall of these careless creatures, it is *considerably* inconvenient. In the bed-chamber, they sometimes creep snugly in between the sheets, so that it is prudent to examine the beds, if you prefer to lie alone. Somewhat frequently they are discovered, by a torpedo touch, in putting on your shoes or boots in the morning; and sometimes they are stowed away in garments worn on other parts of the body. On these accounts, as I generally wish to see the stars in the morning sky in this delightful climate, I am perplexed in performing

my toilet in the dark. But hitherto no unpleasant accident has occurred.

* * *

May 8th, in the afternoon, in the volante, we went a few rough miles, over more stone than soil, to see two or three curious sumideros. The Guira Simarona, or wild calabash tree, was pointed out to me in the forest; it considerably resembles the cultivated calabash in limb and leaf; but the fruit, instead of being as big as pumpkins, is no bigger than oranges. The fruit of this tree has medicinal qualities, perhaps magnified by common people, but respected by physicians. By the side of a highway we discovered the yawning of a sumidero overhung with trees and *bajuca*, unknown even to the planter with whom I was riding, though he lived in the neighborhood. We looked into the gulf, and could see it opening in different directions, and probably leading to extensive apartments.

On the estate which we proceeded to visit, there were two of these sumideros, beautiful and invaluable. We passed down natural steps into a spacious cavity, twentyfive or thirty feet deep, to two natural baths of the purest rock water, with a rise or partition of rocks between them. The baths are overhung with rocks, shading the bathers from the morning sun. These rocks drop with petrifying water, which lies on the surface a transparent scum. It is, however, easily brushed aside, and leaves the bath so crystalline that the smallest fish is seen in its bosom, the smallest speck at the bottom.

The gentlemen's bath is at this time six feet deep, and sometimes it is twelve; and of sufficient extent to admit of swimming. The ladies' bath is about half that depth. To increase the interest of this beautiful bagnio, which the Naiads might covet to haunt, several hollows in the rock above are the natural domicils of bees; and so enchanted are they with the spot, that in some cases they have appended their combs to the plane surface of the rock, masses of which, curiously formed in cones, would measure from one to two feet in length and breadth.

A third sumidero in the neighborhood of the baths, by a little sloping given to the entrance, furnishes an unfailing spring, to which the cattle of the portrero have access. The waters of this charming fountain appear to have communication with each other, and fish appear in the baths and hide in the recesses at pleasure.

* * * *

From authority which I cannot question, I learn that there are caves in mountains beyond Manantiales, which abound with human bones. A captain of police stated to a distinguished friend of mine, that in pursuing renegado negroes he was obliged to enter two different caves, into which they ran for concealment, and was surprised to find them covered with human bones in such quantity that carts might have been loaded with them without seeming to diminish them.

By what means they came there is a question not very easily solved. The theory which some adopt, is that the natives when pursued by the Spaniards, took refuge in these caves and perished with hunger. Is it not as probable that the original inhabitants may have used these caverns as cemeteries? I have somewhere read, or received from, I believe, an intelligent captain who spent a few years on the Northwest Coast, that the natives there bury in caverns, and that the skeletons are in remarkable preservation, and generally the teeth of a living whiteness and polish.

LETTER LVII.

TO MRS E—— A——.

LA MARY ANNA, MAY 15th, 1828.

I SHAVED by starlight, and was on my way with Monsieur P. for Mr S.'s estate a half hour before sunrise; with my doublet and great coat, like a Montero. I found the mayoral and about

one third of his hands, a hundred and thirty, at work on a dam across the San Juan river, and a canal leading from the pond to a sumidero to carry a saw mill. It was a lively scene. Several carts were carrying soil from the canal to the dam, and the hands, men and women, boys and girls, with baskets on their heads, were carrying their loads, proportioned to their strength, like a foraging party of *bibiaguas*.

In the canal was a lusty negro with oxen and an American plough loosening the stiff and clayey soil, which he performed dexterously, accomplishing, said the mayoral, the work of thirty men. Several men with shovels were engaged in filling the baskets, and the *contre mayorals*, with each his badge of office in his hand, followed his division, as an *arriero* or muleteer his loaded horses or mules to the market, quickening their pace with the word of cheer.

The dam which they are forming will be sixteen feet high from the bottom of the pond ; and to secure the ground beneath, they have dug as many more, to a *coco* bottom. The canal leads to the foot of the *batey*, and the water, after falling over the wheel with eleven and a half square inches of it is to lose itself in the mouth of a *sumidero*. If they succeed in thus losing the water, of which there can be no reasonable doubt, he will be able to saw from three to six months in the year. The well of this estate is a hundred and twenty feet deep, and water is pumped by mules. Near it is a *sumidero* which descends about fortyfive feet, and opens into a cave ; but it has not been penetrated, as the air is so foul as to extinguish a lighted candle.

Near the well is his cooperage and blacksmith shop, where the work is done with neatness by negro mechanics.* The hospital is a hundred and twentyfour bars from the house, north ; and with a valley between them, is nearly on the same level. The *bohea* is eightyfour bars from the house, south, with a valley between them, the future garden of the *batey*. At the head of

* Near the mechanic shops is a mill with a revolving stone to grind bricks to dust.

this valley is a row of tanks partly formed, and to be completed at leisure, which will be sufficient to irrigate the garden at pleasure, and without watering-pot, and to display an enchanting variety of water works that may emulate Versailles. The land of this *second coffee estate of the island*, is thirtytwo and a half cavallerias, about eleven hundred acres. Canucos seventeen bars square; negroes a little rising four hundred.

The mayoral on horseback conducted us in a more direct way through the estate, and we saw excellent coffee trees in a forest, and under wassemar shade. There was some miserable land, the soil white clay and sand; but in general the estate was in fine order. Considerable use is made of lime as a manure, and the effect is very perceptible and immediate. An extensive dam has been erected to prevent the rains flooding a part of the estate.

On the whole, I have seen better land than some of it, but no estate which appears better conducted, and which gives so fair a promise one day of a superb and beautiful bately, with every convenience and luxury which an oriental fancy could desire.

In passing thence to the Mary Anna, I observed a beautiful square of Guinea grass of eight or ten acres, perfectly set, of equal size, and same color all over, walled in on two sides, and lime hedges on two. At half past seven we arrived at the Mary Anna, having travelled fourteen miles, and seen many interesting things.

* * *

The Mary Anna is a fine estate of 250,000 trees, and 140 negroes. A fine avenue of palm and orange leads to the bately.

After breakfast and a short repose we walked out, chiefly in shade, to see a portrero tank. It is beautiful; the tank being — bars square, and — deep, and the sloping pavement by which it is filled, —.

We passed into a beautiful wood, and measured what is thought one of the largest ceybas on the island. Two feet from the ground, across the braces spread to sustain the vast tree, we found by a line that it measured *sixtyeight feet* in circumference.

After dinner we mounted our horses for a rapid survey of four fine estates which lie in a square together with a public road on three sides of them. The first is the Mary Anna, a coffee estate of 350 acres, of 250,000 trees, and 140 negroes. The second the Unidad, of 350 acres, 230,000 trees, and 160 negroes. The third, the Reunion, of 700 acres, 450,000 trees, and 300 negroes. The fourth, the Doloris, a sugar estate, of 2000 acres, and 260 negroes; the two last estates belong to one person, and are under one administrator, and the negroes are transferred from one to the other as the work of each is most pressing.

Last year the three coffee estates yielded about 35,000 arobes of coffee, and the sugar estate about 32,000 arobes of sugar, besides corn, and plantain, and tobacco, and a long et cetera, not convenient to enumerate. The soil and cultivation are excellent; the fields level; the trees and cane thrifty; the bateys, except of the sugar estate, where it is customary to pay little respect to neatness, are very tasteful, and the whole is a garden with only small copses of wood, which are as ornamental as they are necessary; and nearly throughout inclosed by a lime hedge, or a handsome, I may almost say a *faced* wall, two feet and a half wide at bottom, and a foot narrower at the top. In the circuit we dismounted only once, to pass the narrow edge of a bibiaguera, excavated twentyfive feet deep, and once to see the sugar buildings.

This enumeration is given to exhibit a favorable specimen of the manner in which the district of St Marks is cultivated. A little more than 3000 acres of land are cultivated by a few less than nine hundred slaves, and yield 875,000 lbs. of coffee, and 800,000 lbs. of sugar, worth \$126,750, in bad times, as it respects coffee. If you survey this wide extent, the broad aisles and shady rides for horse and carriage, the profusion of palms and mangoes, of lime hedge and rose hedge, of flowering shrubs in the avenues and of fanciful parterres in the bateys, not only the comfortable, but in some cases the handsome boheas, and

every species of building that is needful or ornamental, you might imagine yourself in the park and pleasure grounds of an English nobleman, and stopping to consider the revenue, you might think yourself in the domain of a German prince.

If you will consider this account of a square of land almost surrounded by public road, in connexion with my former letter exhibiting a sectional view of the island, they will illustrate each other, and at least will prevent misconstruction. Around these magnificent estates are the sitios and portreros, as guards of public order, which a predominance of unsafe population might otherwise subject to great contingencies.

* * *

On the Mary Anna they make much use of the plough among coffee ; and are not alarmed, if they rend some roots and some branches, as they are immediately more than replaced. From Mr B. I learn that the bajuca turned tree, is termed Jaboa ; and we observed that its old nature was in some degree preserved, that of running from above to obtain a fixture in the ground. Tassels of roots are often seen starting out of the trunk of the tree twenty feet or more from the ground, and out of large limbs, and growing and fluttering in the wind, till they reach the ground, when they grow more rapidly, and fill up the spaces in the openwork trunk. So that a large tree is made up of a tissue of trunks running into each other.

The very excellent tanks made on this estate are done in the following manner : The shell is first built, backed with heavy rock to prevent bursting. The outside is first completed and dried. The inside is then plastered faithfully, which dries without cracking, as it is sheltered from the sun. The coat remains eight or ten days to dry, but not too much. The last coat is made of lime, and of *limestone* beaten fine and sifted, rather more of lime than of stone dust. The smallest crack is not to be seen in the tank.

* * *

Yesterday at sunrise I rode and examined a tree in Don

Tarafa's estate, growing out of a high dry stump, roots spread down its sides as if it were soil. The top bushy, and seven to nine inches through the flourishing stem.

I entered a gate on which was written *El Recreo*, (Don Munoz) and turned into the *guadaria* leading to the *batey*. There are six rows of trees, two of which are large mango trees, at right and left; the other four are various. There are two beautiful gardens, one on each side of the house; a neat hedge; green bowers; and flowering trees, and shrubs, and plants. The garden on the right is much ornamented with mason work, and jets for water. The *guadaria* leading from the *batey* is also beautiful. Four rows of trees, and four rose hedges in bloom, lead to a circular lagoon, surrounded by a rose hedge with a little island in it, and a palm-areal in the centre; and ducks and ducklings were swimming about in it. A figured edging of Bermuda grass, and circular row of small orange trees, are without the rose hedge. The lagoon is in the range of the *guadaria*, and beyond is a beautiful bamboo alley, lofty, and finely arched. At right angles is an alley of very beautiful bread-trees, forty in number.

* * *

LETTER LVIII.

TO MRS E—— A——.

MAY, 1828.

WE rode from the *Reserva* to the village of San Antonio to examine whatever was remarkable. I was attended by a very respectable black man, the mayoral of the estate. He is a freed man, with considerable property, and a salary of \$1000 per annum, while another very respectable French manager of two estates in the neighborhood receives but \$800. He has several daughters in Havana for their education. He was dressed, and

mounted, booted, and spurred, with as much taste as other gentlemen ; and as we passed to town, and through the streets, he received the salutations of very many white people, as well as free blacks, and bestowed his benison on slaves of good character, as he passed them, which was always received with a smile and token of gratitude. He is probably about forty years old, and is a striking instance of the respect and prosperity to which good conduct may conduct a slave, in this country. He was freed by his master, and entered into the service of the proprietor of this estate as a body servant. Discovering talents and fidelity, he gave him education, and made him his manager.

The village of San Antonio contains a good sized church, a market square with a considerable variety of meats and vegetables, many handsome houses, and many of mean appearance, new and handsome barracks with about 300 soldiers, and a very remarkable river. The river we examined for a half mile extent. There is much water in its bed before it enters the thicket of houses. Black men were swimming back and forth in the uncovered river ; and when standing, not in the deepest part, the water covered their shoulders. A mill stands on the bank, as I was informed, but I could not discover wheel or dam. A large number of ranchos, or palm roofs, are thrown over the river, in various places, for screens to persons bathing. Some of their baths seemed to have been formed with more care and expense, the ground being excavated in the bank to admit the running stream, and the ranchos are connected with houses. The river, where not disturbed by horses and hostlers, and by soldiers washing their clothes, is clear, and its waters cool. I cannot learn that the water has any mineral qualities, but it is a place of very considerable resort for bathing. Houses are hired by families, and they pass a number of weeks bathing and enjoying the pastimes most common in the island, and indulging in the vices which everywhere intrude among the gay and idle.

What is most remarkable about this river is the quantity of water, which you see running through the town, and its entire

disappearance within thirty rods of a large bridge, and within five rods of a spot where the water is running briskly and in sufficient depth for soldiers to stand on the bank and wash their clothes. The ground over which it passes is stony, and through holes and fissures, common in this island, the water merges at this season in silence. When the rains come, and the stream swells to a larger size, it holds on its course a few rods further, and leaps at once into a *sumidero*. This spot we examined with care. Immediately over the yawning gulf, and on a shelf of rock, stands a vast *ceyba*. Beneath its roots, in a downward angle, the cavern opens its mouth, a few feet in width, and thirty or forty from corner to corner; and when the stream is at its summer height, the flood rushes into this immense throat, with a thundering noise, which has been heard three miles. A *Montero* on the spot observed, that this cave had been examined about forty rods under ground, where it opened into another *sumidero*, which also became a cave. The direction of the waters where they merge, is for Guanima and the Caribbean sea. We rode through the principal streets of the town, and visited the church. It is a good sized country church, with a belfry and chime of bells. A small chapel is appended to one corner of the church for the burial service. The church was opened, and we entered. There was a taper burning before the altar, and two women kneeling, and one of them with a rosary on her finger, was now and then passing a bead.

The furniture of the altar, I perceive, is varied considerably in form, material, and general appearance, in different churches. This was not highly ornamented. There was a spread of red damask, or some other cloth, over much of the wall behind the altar. In different parts of the church there were three or four wax figures of the Virgin, with the infant in her arms, nearly as large as life, and covered with glass. Her head is adorned with a crown, and her neck with brilliants, I could not determine of what value.

In the southeastern corner of the church is a small room,

appropriated to the rite of baptism. In the centre stands a marble font of considerable capacity, covered, and with a small crucifix standing erect, its base being a cube of lead.

In no plantation which I have visited, are their *guadarias* of such width and shade, and beauty, as those of the associated estates of *Reserva*, *Fundador*, and *Pequena Cabana*. The volante can pass twentyfive miles under superb shades without passing twice over the same avenue. Single *guadarias* leading to bateys are sometimes more highly ornamented. Four and even six rows of palm and mango, and of other ornamental trees are seen, with equal numbers of shrubs with gaudy flowers, or rose hedges, or gay clumps of annuals. But those beauties are in small compass ; but here twenty *caballerias* of land are adorned, with fruitful coffee trees and graceful palms, and mangoes so rich in branch and foliage as to make twilight of a tropical noon.

LETTER LIX.

TO MRS E—— A——.

HAVANA, MAY 22d, 1828.

I HAVE this moment arrived from the country, and have a few minutes only to apprise you of my circumstances and plans. First of all, as you will be most interested to know, I am exceedingly well. Even my cough is better. I have a fine appetite, and fine spirits, and rode this morning before ten o'clock, twentyseven miles, breakfasting on the road. I am last from the charming family of Mr F., where I have spent two days, enjoying the real sweets of domestic life. Not a member of the family failed of contributing in every devisable way to my enjoyment. But I will spread out the particulars when we meet, which I trust, through the great goodness of God, will be in a few days.

Everything for some weeks has gone on smilingly ; and as I

am at the water's edge, and can throw the letter beyond the reach of prying eyes, I now tell you plainly, what you have guessed I dare say with your yankee sagacity, that I have decided, if God sends me to the United States in safety, to publish a volume which will gratify public curiosity on a point to which it has been unsuccessfully directed for a great while.

* * *

So much for business. As the letter is not yet called for, I add a few words of my morning adventures. The major domo entered my chamber at four o'clock, with a light; and five oranges, peeled, to my hand. I dressed in few moments, washed, despatched my five oranges, and looked at the stars. The gentleman manager, a *gentleman* with black skin, a freed-man, with a salary of \$1000 per annum, called to bid me good morning—and informed me the volante was at the door. Mr F. then appeared in his night gown, to see if everything was as it should be, and to embrace me at parting. The bolt of a door turned between my chamber and another, and Mrs W.'s hand was thrust through the crack to bid me farewell; Miss C.'s succeeded; and I leaped into the carriage. My calesero seemed almost to fly. We were in the village of San Antonio in about twenty minutes, and fifteen miles in two hours and five minutes, with the panting animals. There, at Rincona, we stopped an hour, and with fresh horses, which Mr F. had sent over night, we came like the wind through a beautiful farming country, full of swells and hollows, cultivated in large cabbage gardens, corn fields—large fields, acres and acres, of tumatas, and every delicate vegetable that will fetch money in this vast city. As it is against the law for the cits to ride with more than one horse, except for the Captain General and the Bishop, I was astonished at the temerity of my calesero, who dashed into the city with two, not relaxing his speed except at corners, and where he must drive to a hair. I was rather alarmed to see him dash by the palace of the Governor, as if to brave him to the face. But nobody arrested me, though a soldier now and

then, with his whiskered upper lip, seemed to look hard at me. I now suspect that a country carriage is allowed to enter with two horses. We stopped at the door where Mr G. does business, and my baggage, my living and dead scorpions, my two dozen of oranges, and my black hat, (my white was on my head,) were in a moment transferred to an apartment as cool as the mango alleys of Mr F.—the mercury at 84°. You would smile to peep in upon me, dressed as I am for dinner and company. I am in borrowed feathers—a gingham coat, white waistcoat and trousers, white cotton socks, and thin shoes. This is done for coolness, and because it is of no manner of importance to observe costume in this place. Even more,—it is safer that I appear like a Spaniard in this city of the stiletto. I am fully of opinion that I am in as healthy an air as in the country; and, rely upon it, I shall not budge a step in the street till the vertical sun has lost much of his power,—in the last of the afternoon, and the first of the morning. It is Friday. I expect to sail on Sunday. Others have arrived in New York in nine days: that is better than a common chance. I hope to see you in a fortnight.

How is my good friend and colleague? Bid him wait patiently. I am as anxious to be at B. as any of my dear friends are to see me. I now indulge the hope that I shall be able to renew my labors, and shall hope, by Divine assistance, to be useful for a few years before I go to my great account. I have much peace of mind in reviewing the last four months of my labors. They have been very busy ones,—and I think uprightly improved for the benefit of my fellow men on this island and over the water. I implore the Divine blessing upon my humble efforts to do a little good, while seeking my health over mountain and valley of this enchanting island. With love to my dear children, to M., and I., and everybody,

Yours, &c.

LETTER LX.

TO MRS E—— A——.

MAY 22d, 1828.

WITH Mr G. and Dr H. I crossed the bay, in a boat with an awning, and ascended the hill on which the immense fortification of the Cabanas has been excavated and built. Our passage occupied, I should think, no more than five minutes. A vast number of vessels lay at anchor on the north side of the bay. They are not permitted to load on the city side, because they are limited for room. They take the goods on board in lighters. Some part of the suburb, Casa Blanca, extended itself quite to the spot where we landed. We ascended a steep hill slowly, and my companions, wishing to produce an agreeable surprise, objected to my looking round, before I came to the foot of the Cabanas. The view from that spot is charming. The whole city and bay are spread out before you, with Regla on the southeast, and the suburbs on the southwest extending farther than the eye can descry. The Punta fort just without the gates, and the fortification which lines the city shore, with the Governor's palace, and the plaza de armas, seem to lie at your feet. The city is a glittering object, with walls and houses of chalky whiteness, painful to the eye when the sun is running his vertical course.

We soon opened the vast excavation between the first line of fortification, and the hill which slopes to the northeast. Both are cut and formed nearly perpendicular; and, to enjoy a view from the highest accessible point without the fortification, we ascended a long and tedious flight of steps, cut about a yard into the perpendicular rock. As the steps were without guard, we leaned prudently towards the rock, and at length stood on the crest of the natural hill; the opposite fortification rising sufficiently above us to command the whole ground to the sea. From this point, we could distinctly see the populous village of Guanamacoa.

On this natural hill, a little shaped, but not fortified, we walked a considerable distance, and descended another longer flight of steps into the vast fosse between hill and fortification. Over this ditch we at length came to the bridge, which leads from the hill to the superb entrance into the fortification, which is furnished with a draw, raised by balanced levers, if we could judge by looking from a distance. Through a little town near the draw bridge, which we supposed a convenient settlement to aid in the comforts of the garrison, we passed to the end of the Cabanas. The length of this immense fortification is estimated at three quarters of a mile. The breadth of the ditch varies, we judged, from fifty to a hundred feet. The cannon were fixed on the summit with embrasures, so constructed as to rake in every necessary direction. There were apertures, as in gaols and penitentiaries, to admit light and air, but there appeared no portholes to thrust out a second tier of guns.

This, however, is a bird's-eye view of but one range of this vast fortification. There are two more which run parallel with it, with similar excavated ditches between them; and the central range is higher than the others, and its shot passes over them. That range of fortification which fronts the city is located on ground so precipitous and rocky, and so close to the water of the bay, that it needs no ditch.

With this very imperfect and exterior view of these fortifications, we can judge something, at least, of the extent of the interior. It is, indeed, a populous town, and has accommodations for from 15 to 30,000 men, to lodge, and board, and fight. As we passed the end of one of the fortifications, the spacious door lay open, and we had a glimpse of handsome arrangements within, resembling houses and lighted streets. It was then the time of twilight.

The labor and expense of this immense fort have of course been vast. We must not talk of the square feet, nor of the square rods, which have been excavated in the solid rock, and reared of massy stones above it. There are miles of this as-

tonishing work. It is difficult to ascertain on authority the expense of the fortification. It is the policy of the government to hold silence on these subjects. The sum which rumor states, is from thirty to forty millions of dollars. I have heard *ninety* mentioned. The king, it is stated, on learning the cost, shrewdly or simply asked whether the Cabanas were made of silver.

It has been said that the Cabanas is connected with the Moro by an underground passage, that each may minister fresh troops or a retreat, as they may severally need them. We could discover no external sign of such connexion. They are, we judged, about one eighth of a mile apart. We passed on to see the Moro. It stands on a continuation of the hill of the Cabanas, at the narrow mouth which opens into the harbor; and is washed and almost undermined on two sides by the sea. And on a third side, where a deep and broad fosse has been excavated in the rock, the sea dashes in. We judged this fortress to be a hundred feet high; of its other dimensions we could not well form an estimate.

In returning, we passed under the frowning walls of the Cabanas; and, seen by the light of the moon, almost over our heads, it had a romantic appearance, like poetic descriptions of baronial castles.

LETTER LXI.

TO MISS E—— A———

HAVANA, MAY 23d, 1823.

WITH a friend, in a volante, we sallied out of the Montserrat gate, guarded, as the gates always are, by soldiers, and entered the suburbs, and crossed the bridge over the Zaguan, a small river with a full and constant current, which has been brought through the suburbs, and into the city, at a moderate expense, and with infinite advantage to the inhabitants of both. I see these waters spouting into large basins in the city, and sporting

in jets. It waters the gardens of the Campos Santos, and the extensive enclosures of the Botanical Institution; and a rill of its waters runs through the squares and extensive buildings of the Casa de Beneficiencia. It is quite a shame that the streets of the city should be filthy, offensive, and almost pestilential, when water with a sufficient height and column for the purpose, might be flashed over the whole pavement of the city.

We travelled near the beach, and inhaled the fine breeze which is dashing the waves against the shore. We passed by the Lazaretto and the Insane Hospital, which appeared to be enclosed by a handsome new wall, as if they were one institution; but they are perfectly distinct. Close to the latter is the Campos Santos, the particular object of our visit.

The inscription and painting over the entrance are striking. In the centre, at the top, is a well executed picture, emblematic of death, and of the consolation a Christian may derive from a look into futurity. On the left hand is a widow shrouded in a veil, with Hymen's torch in her hand, reversed, and the dust extinguishing the flame. In the same compartment is the widow, without the mourning weeds, but with a grave and intense look, resting her arm on a circle, the well known emblem of eternity.

At the left hand of this compartment is another, with a female figure and the emblems of faith; a cross and a Bible. At the right hand is another female figure, with one hand resting on the Bible, and the other on a staff, round which a snake is entwined, his head near the hand, regarded by her as harmless.

On the tablet below these paintings, is the following inscription:—

A la Religion.

A la Salud Publica.

*El Marques de Someruelos,
Gubernador.*

*Juan de Espada,
Obispo.*

We passed through the humble chapel, where, in ordinary cases, the service for the dead is performed, into the burial

ground ; and walking on the paved aisle, we crossed to the opposite side, where is a second beautiful chapel for the last rites of the opulent and charitable. On the front of this building is inscribed—

Ecce nunc in pulvere dormiam. *Job. 7.*

Et ego resuscitabo eum in novissimo die. *John. 16.*

We advanced to a grating, and on the wall of the interior fronting us, we saw a well executed painting, illustrative of the above inscription. On the lower part of the wall is a scene of death. An aged man, ready, like Jacob, to give up the ghost, with a solemn but placid and resigned countenance, seems uttering to his family, weeping around him, the words of Job. Then, above it, is a resurrection scene, the angel blowing the last trump, and a pious family rising out of the tomb, showing fulfilled the words of Christ in the second line of the inscription.

We passed thence to a corner of the yard to examine the inscription on the shaft mentioned in a former letter. The words on the obelisk were—

Exultabunt ossa humiliata.

The same were inscribed on each of the four shafts at the corners. We were a little at a loss for the precise intention of this motto, before we observed a little enclosure at the corner, made by a neat wall about six feet high, running circularly. On looking over the wall, we observed skull bones and other human relics lying in water, thus accelerated in their hasty progress to undistinguishable dust.

This part of the Bishop's plan was conformable to the Spanish custom, throwing the bones of a re-opened grave into a common heap. At the same time it displays a kind respect to decency and to human feeling, human weakness, if you will, by drawing a veil over the scene, and by a soothing allusion to a glorious resurrection.

The Bishop has left nothing undone which might bring public sentiment to accord with this important change in the disposition of the dead. In the passageway through the first

chapel he has hung up, printed neatly in large letters on paste-board, a suitable inscription.

LETTER LXII.

HAVANA, MAY 23d, 1828.

WE have a fine Norther agitating the bay of Havana, and of course shaking from its wings the blessing of health on the poor seamen, broiling usually under the southern side of the bold hill, on which the Cabanas is built. This is peculiarly fortunate for me, as, just at this moment, there is no vessel in which I can embark. It is as comfortable where I am, as in the country, and all my friends judge it quite as safe. Besides reasons given in the other letter sent by this opportunity, it is a serious objection to embarking in the *Transit*, that she has been condemned, and has a molasses cargo, said to be intolerable to a fresh water sailor. There are other vessels soon to sail, in one of which, the earliest, if it be a safe and healthy one, it is my intention to embark.

There is a singular complaint rather prevalent in the city, called *dingue*, a sort of influenza, more troublesome than dangerous. I hope not to be disturbed by it—it usually lasts but two or three days. This morning, a Captain C., from Salem, died in the harbor. He seems to have thrown his life away, as he needed, but would have no physician or assistance of any kind. I hear of no sickness in the city but the *dingue*,—nor in fact in the bay. These circumstances, I hope, will render you easy in mind about your husband.

You must excuse me this morning with a short letter, as I am engaged in drawing up an account of my visit to the Cabanas yesterday, and a second visit to the Campos Santos. I rise in the city, as in the country—go out early—stay in when the sun is high. They think me the very pattern of prudence

here, and think, if I should spend the summer in Havana, there is, for me, no manner of danger.

* * *

I have this morning been to the Governor's to obtain a passport, to be ready to take the first passage which offers. But his Excellency, having the *dinquer*, does no business.

I forget whether I mentioned the music of the Cathedral in my letter hastily written when I was in Havana before. It was, by a very great difference, *the best I have ever heard*. The organ, I suppose, was well played, but I might almost say I did not hear it; I was so engrossed by the vocal performers. I am anxiously inquiring for a further chance to hear such music. I hope to hear some this afternoon, but there is doubt. Tomorrow is with them the day of Pentecost, and there will be music again. At Matanzas I heard military music in mass; and I believe, stated the circumstance in letters written there. At seven tomorrow, in the church of the Dominicans, there will be similar music. I shall endeavor to hear both.

The Bishop of Havana is a very respectable man, and does a great deal of good with his \$110,000 per annum. I was gratified with a sight of his reverence this morning, taking the air in his *volante*. His equipage was a single horse, his *volante* a little more adorned than others;—his person large and noble; a fine countenance for an old man; and some tokens of office upon his person. Probably we saw his Vicar-General riding with him. We were then returning from an examination of some of his humane and liberal works, and were gratified to see the man of whom all tongues in the island speak in the highest terms.

But I forget, when I am writing to you, that I have business more grave to attend to, certainly, however, not more pleasant.

LETTER LXIII.

TO MRS E—— A——.

HAVANA, MAY, 1823.

I PROPOSE in this letter to send you a description of some of the most striking trees, and of some of the fruits of Cuba—*Lelia* or *Frangepane*, a small tree, about twelve feet high, and regularly ramified. A tuft of superb flowers appears at the end of the branches before the leaves start from the bud. The flowering buds belonging to each tuft are very numerous, fifty or sixty in a cluster, of which from ten to twenty are open at once, quite as gay as so many tulips. Each flower has five petals, and opens three inches and a half wide; the flower opens of a deep red, and it fades slowly into a faint and beautiful yellow. The leaves are of a deep green, and beautifully veined.

Daquilla, or *Lace-wood*, wood yielding lace. It is a small tree. The largest a negro brought home, gone a day on the mountain in search for it, was three quarters of an inch in diameter, and twelve feet high. Mr Rubio Campos, of the Mariana, has seen it as large as his arm. It runs high in proportion to the size of the stem, the leaf is large, it has few limbs. It is probably an exceedingly fine species of the Majagua, of which ropes are made, and twine for fences.

In obtaining this elegant vegetable lace, of which a Marquis of the island prepared frills for a set of shirts presented to the King, a knife is carefully run down the bark, which is peeled off in one piece. To separate the different lamina, which are considerably numerous, some think not less than twentyfour, the bark of the end nearest the root is bruised with a mallet, and each lamina drawn from the inner side. It is then with delicate fingers gradually opened and spread, and a stick of three quarters of an inch diameter, will yield a piece of lace ten or twelve inches wide, strong and white, and fine, and as beautiful, I might almost say, as Brussels.

The Rose Apple. It grows on a tree as large as a common apple tree. The flower is a tassel of white threads, hanging from a calyx of four leaves, showy like the fringe tree of Carolina. The fruit is round, an inch and a half in diameter. Broken, it contains two large seeds like hazel nuts, flat on one side, and poisonous. The pulp, covered with a tender, cream colored skin, tastes and smells like a conserve of roses. It is generally eaten, but is rather indigestible. It is best to extract the juice of it in the mouth, as prudent people do of the cocoanut meat, and throw out the substance.

Travelling in the plantation volante road, skirted for miles by a broad winding lime hedge, I discovered a parasitical plant, evidently belonging to the genus of the pine-apple, adhering to a principal limb. The leaves, of a purplish green, contain about two glasses of water. For its flowers, it shoots up a superb stalk, as red and as gay as the coxcomb of our gardens. The top of the spike a foot high, sends out a dozen braids of red leaves, alternating one above another. Each of these braids has a number of small purple flowers, resembling those on the melon cactus, furnished with stamens and pointal. It is altogether a beautiful plant. I wish it could be got to Cambridge.

Cacao. This tree is very interesting to agriculturists of a tropical country. In addition to what was said in a letter to A. of the 30th of April, I observe that the tree is *ornamental*. The leading shoot is stopped, after sending out two radiations of branches. The tree, however, grows large. At eight years old it yields a hundred and seventy *melons*, a term which I use for want of a better. Each of these melons contains an ounce of cacao seeds dried for the market; and each of them would sell for 12 1-2 cents for forming nurseries. Thus a tree eight years old yields \$37,40. In three years Mr P. expects to make 500 quintals, worth from \$18 to 25 per quintal.

Mr P. has seen trees on the estate of the Marquis of Beytia, as large as the Aguacarte. He states that there are two kinds

of cacao ; the one most common in South America, is with a flattened seed. The species which he raises is much better, and in form more like the pea nut of New Orleans.

The cacao is in bearing all the season, but it yields most in May and December, and grows largest in the rainy season. On the 30th day of April, I saw it upon the stock, and in flower.

Mr P. observes that the tree loves a northern aspect, and cool situations. This seems to intimate that the tropical sun is rather too intense. Why then may it not grow in S. Carolina, where in the interior they are anxious to find a crop for grounds which yield little profit in upland cotton.

Sweet oranges do pretty well in some situations in S. Carolina, and they are tender. Perhaps cacao may be even more hardy.

Very little labor is required for the culture of cacao ; plant—prune—clean ; gather and break the melon ; the seed comes out easily, is easily and quickly dried on the barbecues already prepared for coffee. The seed should remain two days in a heap. It should then be gradually exposed to the heat of the sun, and the article is ready for market.

The melon of the cacao is six or eight inches long, and eight or ten in circumference, with swells like a muskmelon, and the blossom end projecting like a lemon.

FRUITS OF CUBA.

Oranges, in very great plenty and variety ; some almost as large as shaddocks. They are sold on plantations for from \$1,50 to 2,50 per thousand. A barrel will hold about 400.

Pines. This exquisite fruit is easily raised, and will yield about 3,000 to the acre.

Zapote, of two kinds ; esteemed the most delicious of fruits. Tastes very sweet ; a little gritty. Tree beautiful.

Aligator Pear, or Aguacarte, vegetable marrow.

Mamey Colorado. Lofty tree—fruit size of a goose egg, and valuable.

Mamey of St Domingo. Beautiful tree, a cone running high,

and full of branches ; leaf resembling that of the *Magnolia Grandiflora*. Fruit, size of a melon,—fine—superior to the other.

Melon fruit, or Papaya. It grows on a tree in clusters at the top.

Mango. Of two kinds ; by some esteemed the best fruit on the island ; taste resembling a nutmeg melon. The trees are large, bushy, and full of foliage, and make the most beautiful avenues. Riding or walking under its thick green canopy is delightful even at noon day.

Guanavana, Sour-sop. Fruit acid ; cooked, it is almost cranberry sauce.

Chicota, resembles a summer squash ; grows on a vine.

Guayaba. Of this the finest jelly is made. It is eaten as it comes from the tree, but not generally liked.

Bread-fruit. From the Sandwich Islands. Straight, with a broad and deeply indented leaf. Fruit of the size and shape of a large shaddock.

Cimela. The fruit forms, and when it is ripe the leaves come out, in *June*.

Sage-tree, or bush. Leaf considerably like the garden sage.

Date-tree. Resembles the cocoa-nut tree ; trunk full of thorns, small at bottom, swells larger at top. Leaves like palm, but smaller, and prickly. Fruit, size of a hazelnut, tastes like a cocoanut.

Cereza. Cherry—grows on limb and trunk. An excellent preserve—tart like gooseberry.

Sagu. Ornamental plant of the richest dark verdure, and in form a semi globe ; a small white flower like the snow-drop.

LETTER LXIV.

TO MRS E—— A——.

HAVANA, MAY, 1823.

* * *

I WISH to say a few words on the subject of the music of the Negroes. They have sundry simple instruments, which they make themselves, according to their nation.

The Congoes have an instrument which they call bambâ. It is a stick of the size of a thumb, bent into a bow. It is split at the ends, and a stran of *cane*, which grows on the bank of a laguna, of which baskets are made, the stran about a quarter of an inch wide, is secured in the split end of the stick, and wound two or three times spirally round it,—extended across the bow, and secured in the same manner at the other end. It is quite tight.

Then one end of the single string is brought to bear within the lips, and a slender stick is struck against it, and the other end is held by the other hand, with a case knife or stick bearing against it, and withdrawn from it, by turns. The part applied to the mouth seems to be affected by the tongue and breath, like a Jewsharp. A small variety of tones of considerable sweetness is thus obtained. But concords are out of the question, and the notes make no regular melody. They keep fine time by this instrument, and they dance to its tones, as well as to the strokes of their rude drum.

The Mandingos have an instrument a little more complicated; a box, nine inches long, three broad, and two and a half deep, with a square hole for the sound to escape.

On the upper side six reeds of unequal length are confined by twine in the middle, and elevated by two slight bridges placed midway from the part confined, to the ends. The musician sits on the ground, and plays with his fingers, with considerable variety of notes, which across the bately are heard with pleasure by cultivated ears.

The negroes have an accurate ear, and great quickness to learn, in some cases when exceedingly stupid about other matters. With the advantage of good instruments, they discourse excellent music.

* * * *

Black bands, as well as white, play on the Passas, in the suburbs of Havana.

LETTER LXV.

TO MRS E—— A——.

OFF THE FLORIDA COAST, MAY 28th, 1823.

SINCE my last letter my plan has been pretty materially changed, as prudence, I am convinced, required. My last letter, if I recollect, gave you reason to expect that I should sail for Philadelphia or New York; and I have taken passage in a Charleston packet. This I was reluctant to do, on various accounts, and possibly it may take a little more time. My sole motive was to make the earliest escape from Havana. It was sickly in that port. The day before I sailed, the mate of a Providence vessel, I saw passing to his grave on the stranger's hearse, without a friend to follow him. The captain of the same vessel and all the hands were sick. The few days I was in the city, kind Providence so ordered it that there was a constant norther, which is both comfortable and a great security against the fever. The evening before I sailed, the wind changed and blew over the bay, the Dead Sea of Havana, as I may call it, and brought into the city a very unpleasant smell, from which it was very difficult to separate the idea of danger. Four stories high, I was ready to think myself secure, but I found it necessary to retreat from the current, even at that height. Besides the fever in the bay, there is another most singular disease endemic in the place, which they call the dingué.

In some measure it resembles the influenza, which at different times has spread over our country. But it has symptoms peculiar to itself. It is a disease chiefly of the bones. It cripples its subjects in hands and feet. You would think that half the city had the gout. The ancles swell, and are livid ; the muscles, or bones, or both between the ankle and the calf, are much affected. Many of the subjects are laid up at once, and confined in bed. And whole families have been seized at the same time, servants and all, to the number of thirtytwo and thirtyfive, as I have heard particularly mentioned ; so that they have been indebted to neighbors for food and nursing. The physicians also began to croak and predict that the *dingue* was retiring to give place to a more mortal disease, the cholera, such as has appeared in India. The grounds of their opinion I have not ascertained. The *dingue* has prevailed in other islands of the West Indies, and on the south side of Cuba, and at Matanzas ; and perhaps in some of those situations it may have been followed with cholera. These circumstances, however, I thought deserved consideration ; and as a day or two might make an important difference to me, and there was no chance for several days to sail for New York, I embarked for Charleston with Mr G., who, I am inclined to believe, leaves Havana at this time chiefly on account of the circumstances above detailed. When we had taken our resolution, we had passports to obtain. And on repairing to the Captain General's palace for the purpose on Saturday, he had the *dingue*, and could do no business. This was distressing, as Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday were † † days when no business is done. Mrs I. and family were in the same predicament, and influential friends made exertions for us all to have passports given on Sunday. Thrice on this day we repaired to the Government house ; the clerks refused at first, as the Captain General had appointed no deputy ; but after much management, we obtained a permit to pass the Moro castle, and went on board at six o'clock, Monday morning, and at seven passed the Moro with a fine breeze, and left fever, cholera, and

dingue behind us,—except that the poor captain has it in the latter stages of the complaint. He is a stout, robust man, and without any disease for twentyfour years, the bigger half of his life. But he groans under the pangs and disabilities of the dingue. He has livid spots on his fingers, and ancles, and feet. For two or three days he could not get a stocking over his foot; and could only scuff about the deck with his naked toes in his shoes, and now and then speaking words he should not, though he is called a very *clever* man, in the American sense of the word. We rejoice the more in our escape from Havana, as the two days we have been out have been excessively hot. We have great reason for gratitude to God for all his goodness. In reviewing my residence in Cuba, I can see nothing but an uninterrupted series of divine benefits conferred on a wandering invalid. I have found the most surprising hospitality in the whole extent of my journeying. Mr B. was kind and generous, and so have been others who were entire strangers. To Dr M. I am as much indebted as to any man in Cuba. “I was a stranger, and he took me in,—sick, and he visited me.” I have passed much time at his house, because it was a healthy spot, and adapted to excursions of observation; and because he is intellectual, well informed and communicative, a noble and liberal minded man, and a man accessible to religious thought. It is remarkable that on Cuba affairs we to a surprising degree jump in judgment; and having often to make up my mind on important subjects, it has been a great confirmation and comfort, that he has been struck with the soundness of my opinions.

Yesterday we had but little wind, and intense sun, and an awning was but feeble shelter. This is the third morning, and the wind is fresh, but not fair. The current is carrying us along, so that we hope in six or seven days to reach Charleston. Yesterday we had a beautiful sight of dolphins, a dozen or more, but did not succeed in catching any of them. This morning a lusty turtle paddled along in sight of us, and the lovers of turtle soup on board cast a wishful eye upon him; but he soon dived

out of sight. I should think him two feet long. I shall leave this letter open for anything of interest which may further occur, and shall drop it into the post office on arriving in Charleston.

* * *

May 29. We are making very little progress ; it is nearly a stark calm, and has been so these twenty hours. We last evening saw a fire on the Florida coast. This day one of the men darted a five pronged spear into the head of a dolphin ; and he was displayed to the passengers. Whether the blow killed him too suddenly, I cannot say ; but the exquisite change of colors in a dying dolphin, of which I have heard so much, in this case came short of my expectations. The fish in the water is very beautiful ; his motions are graceful like a swan, if I may compare a fish and a bird,—and he appears of the color of burnt sulphur. Out of the water he has rather a brassy hue, and is a little spotted like a trout. He is thin, as if he had seen few flying fish for a month. His head is singularly formed, rising circularly above his mouth.

* * *

May 30th. There is a fine change in our prospects since yesterday, 4, P. M. We have had a fine wind, and have been going most of the time since, seven or eight knots by the log, and three or four by the current. We are in a fair way, if the wind does not chop round too far, to get into Charleston to-night or in the morning. The billows are white crested, and cheerfulness reigns on board. My intention is, not to remain a day in C. if there be a vessel to take me northward. Having taken my leave of C., I was reluctant to return thither again. But I cannot feel thankful enough that I escaped from Havana as I did. All my friends affirmed, that for a man of my years and cautious habits, there was no danger. But prudence forbids being needlessly in a city where fever prevails, saying nothing of the other diseases. On the water I am very well, and my cough is almost extinct. O ! I do indulge the hope that I am to be spared to labor a little longer in the vineyard, and in the

chosen spot where my tabernacle has now been twentyfour years pitched. Yesterday was the anniversary of my peace sermon before the Convention. I fear its gentle notes have not been echoed this year. There is no one thing that gives me so much pain, in returning to my beloved country, as to think of its religious dissensions. May the God of peace hush them, and for ever preserve my voice from notes of discord.

Our prudent captain is taking in sail, thinking the wind too gusty for so many passengers, among whom are three ladies. I hope we shall reach our port in twelve, at farthest in twenty-four hours. Immediately on receiving this, write to me, and direct the letter to be left in the post office, New York; or to the care of Mr C., the tourist, if you can recollect his address. It is long since I have heard from home.

May 31st—Charleston. We have had a charming run, and arrived this morning at seven o'clock. The packet sails for New York on Monday, and I think I shall take passage on board of her, if she is not running over with passengers. Happy am I to touch my natal soil again, and I hope soon to revisit *home*, *sweet home*. My health on this passage has been *fine*, and my cough almost extinct. I think, accidents excepted, between this and home, that you will think my general health quite as good as before my sickness, and that my cough is no more than I have had since my former return from the south. Blessed be God, the object of my absence has been attained to a much greater degree than my most sanguine friends could hope.

* * *

But I must hasten to adjust a few things here, and to secure my passage. Therefore with love to the family, and neighbors, and friends generally,

Yours affectionately.

APPENDIX.

LETTER FROM DR M—— TO THE AUTHOR.

RECOMPENSA, SAN MARCOS, CUBA, MAY 18th, 1828.

DEAR SIR—I have received your favor, requesting in writing the account I have already given you in conversation, of the famous springs of San Diego; and hope my compliance will reach you before you sail. Those springs are 35 leagues from Havana, bearing west southwest. They have been analysed, and found to contain sulphurated hydrogen gas in very large proportion, sulphate of lime, hydrochlorate of magnesia, and carbonate of magnesia. The temperature of the waters is 95 degrees of Fahrenheit.

The principal springs are two in number,—the Tigre, and Templado. They are very magnificent, and situated on the borders of the river San Diego, which has in its bed and borders very many smaller mineral springs. Each spring has its own basin, in which its waters are peculiarly strong, and in these for some complaints it is proper to bathe. From these basins they flow, and commingled with the river, fall into a large reservoir, called here *Payla*. At the periods of bathing this is more than twelve feet deep in the centre, and is 50 or 60 broad; so that it is customary for men to swim in it. There are covered apartments, called ranchos, in which the ladies bathe.

This river has its course through a hilly and moderately fertile country, and runs over rocks of various colors, and during the rainy season the springs in its bed are from ten to fifteen feet beneath the surface. At this time all bathing is suspended. But it falls again in January, and is low enough in February for

use, and continues low till the middle of May. The baths are strong in proportion to the lowness of the river.

Having passed part of the months of February and March, 1827, at San Diego, for my health, I received a letter from the commanding officer of the section, Col. Miranda, requesting me to endeavor to ascertain and reestablish the once far famed spring called the *Gallina*, said to have been so hot that the feathers of a fowl would come off after being plunged in it for two minutes, as certainly as when put into scalding water. In virtue of this authority, I called on the local magistrate, who furnished eight negroes; and the inhabitants went with me to show the spot where it had existed. The tradition among them was, that it had been destroyed many years ago, by a physician, who was of opinion that its violence had occasioned the death of many. The place indicated was between two very large rocks. The men worked diligently all day in what proved to be a fissure in a large stone, losing itself under the head of a large rock. Nothing more could be discovered than the oozing of a fetid, colored water, seeming to have a bituminous substance on its surface, the taste of which was offensive, and it left a disagreeable odor, and unctuous feel on the hands.

The bed and borders of the river are composed of cragged rocks, rendering it difficult for an invalid to pursue its course. I succeeded, however, in ascending the river about a mile, and in that distance I discovered eight springs, all of them marked by the gas constantly issuing from them, and a sulphurous appearance on the rocky shores near to them, and all had a mineral taste, more or less powerful.

The annual attendance at the baths of San Diego has been about seven hundred people; but this year I understand the number is vastly increased. So great is the confidence of government in the virtues of these waters, that every year it makes special arrangements to send a detachment of troops and seamen amounting to a hundred, sick of various diseases, for the benefit of the springs. It is to be regretted that the accom-

modations near springs of such value, are of inferior order. A number of badly constructed houses are occupied by the invalids, but a great part of the visitors live in ranchos, inclosed sheds, for which they pay a high rent for the time of their stay, called the *Temporal*, which is about forty days. Formerly it was usual for the visitors to take everything with them, even to their provisions; but now there are taverns where bed and board are to be obtained.

The wonderful effects of these waters are seen in chronic rheumatism, paralysis, diseases of females, chronic ulcers, eruptions, indolent tumors, old syphilitic affections, and *some* cases of dyspepsia. The efficacy of the waters has appeared almost miraculous in relieving stiffness of the joints, and inability to use the limbs. It is a common thing to see people arriving with crutches, and throwing them away before they have taken forty baths.

An elderly man who had not been able to walk for ten years, was brought to the waters with great difficulty, and in fifteen days he began to use his legs, and in thirty he could walk upright and without crutches. Joints so stiff that they appeared to me ankylosed were rendered supple by the judicious use of these waters. A baker, who had been overcome by working at the mouth of his heated oven, rushed to the door all bathed in perspiration, and was instantly deprived of the use of his limbs. After ineffectually using the remedies commonly employed in such cases, he was promptly relieved by bathing in the waters of San Diego, and drinking them.

The uncommonly large proportion of sulphurated hydrogen gas, contained in these waters, causes a degree of increased action to be felt very soon after the use of them is begun. It is usual that they have a laxative effect; but if this fails, which is the case in many, they bring on a slight fever. Generally the first effect noticed is an increased perspiration, and then a sensation of itching on the skin, attended sometimes with an eruption throughout the surface. Many persons experience a

catarrhal affection, accompanied with irritation of the lining membrane of the mouth and throat. These symptoms of irritation subside promptly when the patient experiences diarrhoea. There are some who in using these waters have this last complaint to a great degree ; in most it is inconsiderable, and almost always without pain, and the food not perfectly digested passes as in Lientery.

From what has been said you will not be surprised to hear that many people with inflammatory affections have unadvisedly used these waters, and have had the misfortune to see their diseases increase, and many times very painfully. Under these peculiar circumstances a large number has died at the springs. It is very requisite therefore that invalids should procure the advice of some physician particularly with these waters, before they repair to San Diego. For it is often very necessary that patients should use some gentle medicine while they are at the baths.

It must be always remembered that they are positively injurious in diseases of the lungs ; and that the effects of them are astonishingly great and salutary in inveterate cases of chronic rheumatism, contractions of the limbs, and stiffness of joints.

It is my hope to find an opportunity again to visit the waters of San Diego, in order to furnish a more exact account of them. In the mean time I submit these remarks to my friend, Dr Abbot, that he may dispose of them in such way as he shall think best. And in taking my leave of him, I beg him to be assured that I shall long retain the memory of his visit, and that no expression of mine can exceed the high degree of respect and esteem I entertain for him.

That God may grant you a safe and comfortable passage to your family, is the prayer of your very sincere friend, &c. &c.

LETTER FROM E. W. S——, ESQ. TO THE AUTHOR.

SANTA ANA PLANTATION, MAY 12, 1828.

I RECEIVED your letter of much interest, dated at the leeward ; you were then indisposed, and, as I inferred, principally from an over ardent wish to inform yourself of all matter of interest pertaining to this favored island. A letter from Mr C. also announced his indisposition, and no doubt from a similar cause. He sailed soon after for the north, but your destination remains to me yet a secret. Nevertheless, as you have sadly disappointed me in not returning to pass April and May with me, I hope you are at this moment safe home,—and as happy as your return must make all around you.

I now turn, (with fears of disappointment to you,) to the primary object of your letter, and believe me that I regret equally with yourself my inability to furnish the desired information, and for two reasons ;—in the first place, I was not in the country at the time of the revolution among the blacks ; therefore my information would be given on borrowed authority ;—secondly, to give such information I should subject both of us to great error, and consequent criticism ; for, without impeaching any one's veracity, it is a truth, that notwithstanding I have sought everywhere to be informed, scarcely two opinions are alike ; and this, no doubt, arises from the great confusion prevailing at the moment. I can only say that the whole plan was conceived in the utmost ignorance, beginning in the slaughtering of a dozen whites, and ending in a few hours by the slaughter of eighty or a hundred blacks,—showing to them palpably, how useless to contend for emancipation in a country where the official returns of the white population is several thousands greater than the slave.

My dear sir,—while in Cuba, you must from your rapid movements and attention to passing events, have collected much information,—enough at least to prepare a work for publication without my humble assistance. To recount my own experi-

ence in Cuba for some years past, would be but to repeat what has been already made known to the public through the medium of some northern journals—but given anonymously to avoid criticism, or the least pretension to authorship;—*don't ridicule my modesty*, but say, if only from charity, that the motive resembles the writer.

I have just finished two views of the Santa Ana dwelling house, and, if possible, I will send you one of the high lands on the Yumuri. Since you left I have made great alterations in the rear of my house, although, I believe, premised before your departure. I should like much to sketch the whole in one view, but, *as you know*, I am without suitable paper, and miserably off for crayons to draw with; this, added to a poor capacity, makes the drawings I now send you, unworthy your acceptance.

I wish you had been with me on a late excursion to Santa Clara, distant, (to the eastern part,) about seventy miles to the windward. I know not if you understand our island phrases, but to be better understood, we went *eastward*. M'C. was my companion, and our object lands, which we found fertile and conveniently situated on the border of an inner basin, where vessels ride in safety, and every facility given for embarkation. At present scarce a footstep marks this region, which is hereafter to become commercially important. The only produce, and which is exclusively confined to the savannas, consists in live stock, the arable land lying between this and the sea. These savannas extend upwards of twenty leagues, resembling a quiet ocean, not a hill or rise of ground to be seen, covered with herbage, and susceptible of cultivation. Small dwellings for tenantry who watch the cattle are occasionally seen along the road,—scarcely a black face to be met with,—showing plainly the bone and muscle we hold up as security against revolutions. I got more information of the interior on this excursion than during the time I have been in Cuba. You must go with me there, for one season in Cuba is not enough to cure a chronic.

We met with land birds of numerous varieties ; scarcely a gun had ever been discharged among them. The Grulla, which stands four feet in height, were very numerous, caroling, as “ushers of the morn, the joyous day.” There were no Palms on the plain, but the beautiful Palmetta I saw in immense groves. They are unlike those you have seen, having proportionate bodies like the Palm, and beautifully regular. I passed a beach fifteen miles long, and from half a mile to a mile wide, along the skirts of which I saw regiments of the deep pink Flamingos, moving in right lines in the order and dress of English soldiers. The waters of numerous ocean lagunas abound with the best of fish, and oysters *that one eats but for the name only*.

This day's ride would have resulted in our being benighted in the impenetrable wood, but for an occasional timber road which has contributed essentially to the construction of the great fabrics at Havana. We reached a watering place. It was dark, and our guide who was also our host, and proprietor of the lands, seven leagues wide, in ascending from the spring, was thrown backwards from his horse. I was one who assisted in raising him ; he seemed, and complained, as if a serious injury had befallen him. I refreshed him from the remaining stores with some liquor, to him before scarcely known, (I saw at his house neither spirits nor wine,) gathering strength, we placed him on his horse, and at ten P. M., after a ride through woods of twenty leagues, we reached home. The old man was taken from his horse to the bed by four persons. The next consideration was medical aid, but no doctor was living in the district. I asked him if he would take some medicine, as he seemed greatly distressed ;—he replied that he never took any, not even *warm water*. I was disposed to be useful, and recommended several simples for him, to his wife and numerous relations about, as I thought, his deathbed. I felt his pulse and skin ; they were feeble and cold, and himself in hysterical screeches, calling out for relief ;—but in the midst of this bodily pain, the old man turned on his side, asked for his pouch, drew

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from it a cigar—then searching for his matchet and flint stone, deliberately lighted his cigar, and threw himself back on his pillow, and continued to groan at every whiff. With these interior inhabitants a cigar and a cup of coffee is to them better than the whole pharmacopœia—the most simple diet suffices, and the whole dress consists of shirt and trousers—the ground or cot is to them alike ; better materials for soldiers I never met with. To their dress I should have added a rosary and cross, the spiritual shield to all bodily harm.

Returning home, my good sir, I sat down to write you this letter, which in place of one more interesting please accept, and with it the very sincere esteem and regard of the writer, and of Lady Bright, as you used to call her. You must not let our correspondence rest, because I do not communicate what you wish me to. It would give me more pleasure to see you, than to hear from you ; but in absence of the person, please send the letter. Have you seen Mrs H. and others of our family ? You made a promise to that effect to oblige me.

Our country is now luxuriantly dressed—my coffee fields rich in quantity, but you know the prices are execrable ;—if not a change soon, I shall seek one by beginning with sugar, on the borders of the above described savannas ;—but let me be hither or thither, I shall ever be glad to welcome my reverend friend within.

Accept, dear sir, the continued regard and esteem of, &c. &c.

Calcutta

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